

No 64,251

BY STEWART TENDLER
CRIME CORRESPONDENT

One charge against Mr Berkowitz alleges that, between January 10 and February 6, he burgled the premises of City solicitors Bates, Wells and Braithwaite and stole £248 in cash and the documentation. He is charged with handling stolen goods between the same

Continued on page 14, col 1



By KEVIN EASON, MOTORING CORRESPONDENT

Both Labour and Conser-

Washington, Tyne and Wear, would be wiped out by the

Ministers under fire, page 2

Letters, page 11

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

Diplomats believe he is pushing President Bush's patience to the limit, especially in an election year when Mr Bush wants to flaunt his Gulf war victory. The administration reportedly wants to make \$20 million available (£11 million) for fresh covert actions against Saddam, but it

The administration is simultaneously stepping up its rhetorical pressure on Saddam. James Baker, the Secretary of State, hinted at "additional measures" against Iraq "within the context of the security council"

**Taking aim at
salesmen who are
scaring people into
investment decisions**
Comment
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Whales are mixing it at the America's Cup and so far they are winning on points
Sport
Page 34

BY SHEILA GUNN -
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

Letters, page 11

BY THOMSON PRENTICE MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

cide with a report in *The*

the majority' of those infected

These are all ways of denying

formed of those risks.

By JOHN GOODBODY
SPORTS NEWS CORRESPONDENT

KATRIN Krabbe, the long-legged world 100 and 200 metres champion, and two other leading German athletes, Silke Möller and Grit Breuer, were yesterday suspended by their national federation after an irregularity in a dope test.

Lutz Neuhäuser, a spokesman for the German Athletics Federation, said that three urine samples allegedly came from the same person. The first A sample had been tested in a South African laboratory, which is not accredited by the International Olympic Committee, but the second B sample will be analysed today in Cologne by Professor Manfred Donike, one of the world's leading experts. If the B sample reaches the same findings, the athletes face the same fate as the two from international athletics and will miss the Olympic Games in Barcelona.

Ruediger Nicker, a federation official, yesterday confirmed that an investigation was underway after a report in *Bild* newspaper, implicating the three ath-

The news is the latest in a series of scandals affecting former East German competitors since the country was reunited. Two months ago about 20 former East German coaches signed an open statement admitting that anabolic steroids, the body-building drug, had helped their swimmers during the 1970s and 1980s, when the East German women dominated international competitions.



The Times

The audited circulation of *The Times* rose by 6,631 to 391,593 in January, an increase of 1.72 per cent. Meanwhile the separate six-monthly National Readership Survey shows that the paper's readership in July-December 1991 rose by 23,000 over the same period of 1990, a growth of 2.1 per cent. This compares with a drop of its closest rivals of 4.2 per cent for the *Independent* and 6.1 per cent for *The Guardian*. *The Times* now leads the *Independent*, among both men and women readers, and has advanced on *The Guardian*.

Into Europe

From Monday the first edition of *The Times* will become *The European Times*. Produced specifically for readers on continental Europe, it will contain all that is presently in *The Times* but with a special emphasis on European issues.

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Figure 1 illustrates a two-stage experimental design. In Stage 1, participants are divided into a 'Control' group and a 'Pre-Test' group. The 'Pre-Test' group undergoes a 'Pre-Test' and a 'Post-Test'. In Stage 2, the 'Pre-Test' group is further divided into a 'Pre-Test' and a 'Post-Test' group. The 'Control' group also undergoes a 'Pre-Test' and a 'Post-Test'. The diagram shows the flow of participants through these stages and the comparison of results.

T1

Ministers under fire as job losses reach 6,000 in a week

THE government was yesterday accused of "wrecking British industry" as it emerged that job losses for the past week were running at the rate of more than 150 every working hour.

Yesterday's announcement by the Ford motor company that it plans to shed 2,100 jobs increased fears that unemployment, currently standing at more than 2.5 million, could approach 4 million before the recession bottoms out and firms start recruiting again.

Conservative MPs said most of the redundancies would be voluntary and that they were the result of improving efficiency in the face of increased competition.

Reported redundancies show that more than 6,000 people were told during the week their jobs would go. The true figure is probably much higher as the effect of small scale company closures take weeks to register in official

The redundancies announced by Ford yesterday have increased fears that unemployment could hit four million.

Tim Jones and Jill Sherman report

figures. The figure is more than half of the confirmed redundancies for the whole of December, the last month for which accurate figures are available, which show that 10,367 people lost their jobs. People in motor manufacturing and other heavy industries appear to have borne the brunt of the job losses.

Thorn EMI said about 800 white collar jobs at head office would go as a result of a decision to convert about 450 Rumbelows shops to retail outlets for consumer electrical goods. British Coal said it was seeking a further 620 voluntary redundancies and Granada television blamed rising costs for its decision to shed 100 jobs. British Aerospace said 450 jobs

would have to go at its guided weapons plants and warned of more redundancies if it fails to secure a £700m order for a new missile for the RAF.

VSEL in Barrow-in-Furness, blamed the recession and the peace dividend for its decision to shed 600 jobs and Vesper Thorneycroft, the shipbuilders, said 350 jobs would go in Southampton.

BT, which has embarked on a big job cutting programme, which so far has not involved compulsory redundancies, said 1,500 cleaning jobs would have to go and hinted hundreds of other employees were at risk in its building services division. In Scotland, the Anderson mining equipment group said 160 jobs would be lost

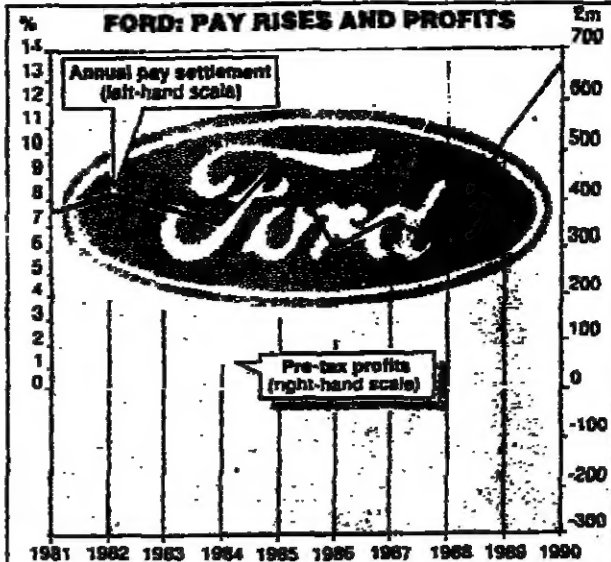
because of a decision to close its plant in Glasgow.

Tony Blair, shadow employment secretary urged the government to use the budget to boost industry rather than lower taxes in the hope of a short term consumer boom.

Gordon Brown, shadow trade and industry spokesman said Labour would step up its pre-budget campaign for action to stimulate investment and employment.

Chris Patten, Tory party chairman ascribed the job losses at Ford to the drive towards greater efficiency. Meanwhile, more than 1,000 new jobs were announced by British Airways yesterday for the manning of a Boeing 747 maintenance base being built at Cardiff-Wales airport.

British Airways Maintenance Cardiff, a BA subsidiary, has signed a single union recognition agreement with the Amalgamated Eng-



neering Union. The agreement will cover a new £70 million base with three hangars to cater for the continuing expansion of BA's and other airlines' fleets. The first phase of the base is due to be operational by April next year, employing up to 1,200 by 1994.

side, union leaders at the factory appeared more relaxed about the losses (Ronald Faux writes).

Peter Moore, the plant's convener for the transport and general union, said that the voluntary redundancies were part of a rolling programme announced last year and agreed in consultation with the union. "We have been with the operations manager at Halewood today and he has confirmed there are no extra redundancies and no more are required," he said.

David Alton, Liberal Democrat MP for Liverpool Mossley Hill, described the news as another devastating blow for Merseyside, where 71,000 people were without work. It was time that the prime minister and the employment secretary took a deep personal interest in why it was necessary for companies such as Ford to make massive reductions, he said.

"It is the other side of the Nissan coin. If the government is going to trumpet about new jobs in the North-East, they cannot shrug off the decision by another company to axe 600 workers."

Eddie Loyden, Labour MP for Liverpool Garston, said that the news clearly showed that the recession had not bottomed out and that the car industry was in a precarious condition. Local council officials regretted the losses, even though they were part of a voluntary programme.

A Ford spokesman said that the losses were within a programme for voluntary redundancies running since 1980. The company could not give its final target because one had not been set. The objective was to produce cars competitively and profitably. "Unless we do that, there won't be a factory to employ anyone," he said.

Ford job losses, page 1

Clarke to take on student unions

By JOHN O'LEARY
HIGHER EDUCATION
CORRESPONDENT

MINISTERS are planning to extend the government's anti-closed shop legislation to student unions if the Conservatives win the election.

Kenneth Clarke, the education secretary, has submitted a proposal for a bill on union membership in the first session of Parliament if the government is returned. The National Union of Students would be compelled to have individual members for the first time, rather than acting as a confederation of local organisations. Membership of local unions would also become voluntary if practical problems can be ironed out.

Jack Straw, Labour's education spokesman and a former NUS president, said: "This would be an act of petty and vindictive spite, sealed by pique that the Conservatives have lost so much support among students. It is typical of Kenneth Clarke to abuse his powers when dealing with whom who may disagree with him."

Kinnock reassures aides on benefits

By JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

NEIL Kinnock, the Labour leader, has reassured senior members of the shadow cabinet that the party's spending commitments on child benefit and pensions will be introduced in the first year of a Labour government.

Both pledges are unlikely to be implemented until at least seven months into the financial year, however, reducing the first-year cost from £3.1 billion to about £1.2 billion. This will ease the pressure for tax changes to pay for them.

Shadow cabinet ministers admit that Labour's separate promise to raise pensions annually in line with earnings may be delayed until April 1994 if a bill cannot be fitted into the legislative timetable in a first year. Labour has long been committed to raise retirement pensions by £5 a week for a single person and by £8 a week for a couple "immediately".

The promise is stated explicitly in the preliminary manifesto *Opportunity Britain*, published last April. The same document pledges to increase child benefit "immediately" by restoring its real

value to its level in April 1987 (a rise to £9.95 in April 1992 prices).

Since Mr Kinnock announced that the tax changes to finance the commitments might be phased in, there has been speculation that the pensions and child benefit pledges might be phased, too. Shadow ministers say the likelihood that the changes might not be put through for some months has increased the prospect that Labour could ease in the tax and national insurance changes which have proved something of an electoral embarrassment.

Conservatives, who have benefited in the opinion polls from suggesting that there is confusion over Labour's tax plans, would clearly exploit any idea that an "immediate" pledge could take six or seven months to fulfil.

A senior Labour source said yesterday that it would take at least five months to sort out the new orders for raising pensions, and that child benefit changes would probably be introduced at the same time — in October or November.

ber. Although benefit changes generally take effect in April, there have been precedents for autumn announcements. A November announcement would cut first-year costs by two thirds.

A spokesman for the social security department confirmed that it could take six months or longer to introduce a change in benefit levels, depending on parliamentary time. The government would have to lay down affirmative regulations, these would have to be debated, written and then passed as law.

The earliest that raising pensions in line with earnings could be implemented is April 1993. If other legislation took precedence in a first year, the move could slip to April 1994, shadow cabinet members admitted yesterday.

A Labour spokesman said last night that the party would still start implementing the changes "immediately" a Labour government was elected, but conceded that it would take five months or so to take effect.

Tory 'blunders', page 6

Reynolds cabinet to break from old style

By JAMIE DETTMER

ALBERT Reynolds, Ireland's prime minister-designate, is likely to make sweeping cabinet changes on Tuesday when he is formally confirmed as leader by the Irish parliament.

So comprehensive was his victory in the Fianna Fáil leadership contest on Thursday that Mr Reynolds has virtually a free hand. He is likely to bring in fresh blood and promote more women.

Up to six ministers could be sacked, including Gerard Collins, the foreign minister, who has had a good working relationship with Peter Brooke, the Northern Ireland secretary. Although well thought of by the British government, Mr Collins's tenure as foreign minister has been seen by many in the Dáil as lacklustre.

He also suffers, as do most of the possible ministerial casualties, from too close an association with Charles Haughey, the outgoing prime minister. Above all, Mr Reynolds seems to want to break from the Haughey style of leadership and to end the public view of ministers being involved in shady dealings.

The other casualties are likely to include Ray Burke, justice minister since 1989, Michael O'Kennedy, labour minister, and Rory O'Hanlon, environment minister. The two most recent appointments, Vincent Brady, defence, and Noel Davern, education, who were promoted to replace ministers sacked last November for plotting against Mr Haughey, are also talked of as possible casualties.

Marie Geoghegan-Quinn, sacked by Mr Haughey as a minister in his own office last autumn, is being tipped to succeed Mr Collins. Mrs Geoghegan-Quinn was the first woman deputy to reach cabinet ministerial level since the foundation of the republic. She is a fluent Irish speaker and has wide experience of European Community affairs. A dynamic politician, she was a member of Mr Reynolds's campaign team in the leadership ballot.

David Andrews, a staunch opponent of Mr Haughey, could become justice minister. He served in government under Jack Lynch but was dropped when Mr Haughey became Fianna Fáil leader in 1979. He is a barrister who has the reputation of being pragmatic.

Aware that large-scale sackings could create a powerful focus of resistance to his leadership among the old guard, Mr Reynolds will probably avoid pushing out more than half a dozen ministers.



Mourners at the funeral of Michael O'Dwyer

Bishop urges city not to lose hope

BELFAST was now a city where fear was gripping homes, evil terrorising streets and hatred embittering hearts, the Roman Catholic Bishop of Down and Connor said yesterday.

The Right Rev Patrick Walsh told the hundreds of mourners at the funeral of Jack Lynch, aged 67, the first to be buried of the five people shot dead in a bookmaker's shop by Loyalist gunmen on Wednesday, that they must not lose hope. "The barriers to peace appear to be insurmountable, to be immovable like the mountains which cradle our city... [but] we with faith in Christ can and must move them."

Earlier, Bishop Walsh officiated at the funeral in west Belfast of Michael O'Dwyer,

aged 21, one of three men shot dead on Tuesday at the Sinn Féin office by a policeman who then committed suicide. Hundreds of mourners heard the bishop speak of the "dark cloud" cast over the city by the appalling series of killings.

Meanwhile the leaders of Ireland's four main churches yesterday visited hospitals in Belfast to thank doctors and nurses for their work with the victims of violence. They rejected a claim by John Hume, MP, the leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, that they were living in ivory towers. Cardinal Cahal Daly, the Roman Catholic primate, said that the church leaders were aware of the stresses and difficulties faced by the politicians.

Ex-stores chief dies in fire

Sir Edward Rayne, former president of Debenhams, died in a fire at his home in Bexhill, East Sussex, yesterday. Sir Edward, aged 69, was reported to have been trapped on the first floor of his house.

Firemen were hampered by the intense heat. Sir Edward was taken to the Royal East Sussex Hospital but was dead on arrival. His wife, Phyllis, aged 73, was taken to the hospital after being overcome by smoke.

Sir Edward, who played bridge for Britain, was born in the United States. His parents moved to England and he was educated at Harrow. He was appointed chairman of Debenhams' fashion division in 1978 and was also chairman of Harvey Nichols and Louis shoe retailers.

Underground firebomb alert

A burnt out incendiary device similar to the type used by the IRA was found near siding on the London Underground at Upney, east London, early yesterday. The device, which was built into a tape cassette box, was seen burning by a passing train driver and police were alerted.

The area was searched and all Underground trains were searched but no other incendiaries were found.

Jury in hotel

The Central Criminal Court jury trying the former Barlow Clowes chief Peter Clowes and his associates, Peter Naylor, Guy Von Cramer and Christopher Newman, has been sent to a hotel until Monday after failing to reach verdicts yesterday. It has spent three days considering verdicts on 20 fraud and theft charges arising from the collapse of the investment empire in June 1988.

Police award

Rae Derek Sparkes, aged 45, of Caernarvon, who had to give up being a policeman after receiving neck injuries when hit on the head in 1986 during riot training, has won £132,000 damages from North Wales Police Authority. The High Court award to Mr Sparkes, now a police clerk, included £4,000 for loss of colleagues' friendship and £10 a year to buy his wife a gift for doing the gardening.

BBC post

Michael Stevenson, deputy editor of the BBC programme *On The Record*, has been appointed secretary of the BBC board of governors from Monday. Mr Stevenson, aged 31, succeeds John McCormick, who has been appointed controller of BBC Scotland.

MPs give Maxwells fortnight to reply

By JILL SHERMAN
POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

KEVIN and Ian Maxwell have been given two weeks to reply to 70 questions from MPs about their role in the Mirror Group Newspapers pension fund.

The Commons social security committee has asked the brothers and all other Maxwell company pension trustees detailed questions about how the funds operated and how individuals contributed at meetings.

Last month, the Maxwell brothers snowed the committee's attempts to question them on how millions of pounds had been siphoned out of the Mirror Group fund, claiming a right to silence.

However, at the time, their lawyers suggested that the brothers might

agree to answer some written questions.

The trustees have been asked to describe meetings in terms of length and atmosphere, who decided the agenda, whether unofficial meetings were held, how new trustees were appointed and whether requests for meetings were ever refused.

The MPs ask whether the late Robert Maxwell brought advisers or staff to meetings who were not trustees, and also ask: "Did you ever vote against Mr Maxwell?"

The committee, chaired by Frank Field, the Labour MP for Birkenhead, also questions trustees on whether they ever signed any transfer of funds, and to whom. Detailed questions are asked on how Bishopgate Investment Management was chosen to take over running the pension fund.

Trustees are requested to list each pension fund for which they are trustees and the amount that they think is missing.

The MPs ask the trustees: "What date would you give as the time when you realised that some of the pension funds might have gone missing?"

Another question makes the request: "List each living member of the Maxwell family: the nature of any instructions that they have given or letters written in the last 12 months; the date they gave them to the following persons or their firms or their partners/directors: Werner Keicher, of Vaduz; Joshua Hassan, of Gibraltar; Geoffrey de la Pradelle, of Paris; persons used by Robert Maxwell and/or Maxwell trust foundations in Panama and the British Virgin Islands."

No-one takes off more.

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Fingerprints checked for clues to kidnapper

By PETER VICTOR

FINGERPRINTS and marks thought to have been left by the kidnapper of estate agent Stephanie Slater are being examined by police forensic scientists.

The new development came yesterday as further details emerged of the kidnapper's letter to police, media and family of Leeds girl Julie Dart, whom police believe was killed by the same man. His letter, full of contrite language, says that he is ashamed, upset and thoroughly disgusted by his treatment of Miss Slater. He described how he tried to make her laugh and smile during her captivity, but says that it was "heartbreaking to see her face change to one which was terrified".

He says: "I knew I was doing this to her. Even now my eyes are filled with tears. I wake up during the night actually crying."

He says he hopes that Miss Slater will get over the experience, but that he never will. His only satisfaction is that he knew he could, and did, carry out the crime.

The letter, discovered at the regional offices of the BBC in Leeds yesterday, was one of seven sent by the kidnapper. Detectives had alerted the BBC to look for the letter.

Police psychologists from

the investigation into Miss Dart's abduction are now examining the letters. The kidnapper denies in the letter any involvement in her murder, but detectives suspect that the details of the letter may be written specifically to mislead them about the two cases and his motives.

Police yesterday disclosed that several sets of fingerprints, found in the house at Great Barr, Birmingham, where Miss Slater, aged 25, was kidnapped by the man, who had arranged to view a property. The prints are being compared with those from West Midlands and West Yorkshire files. A police spokesman said that the process could take months.

West Midlands police refused to discuss the origin of another three marks believed to have been left by the kidnapper. Detectives would not say where they were found or what type of marks they were, but confirmed that they were being examined.

The fingerprints have already been checked against Scottish records, which are computerised. The process will take a great deal longer in England, where records are checked manually.

Police have now received more than 4,000 calls from the public in response to an artist's impression of the kidnapper, produced with Miss Slater's help.

Kevin Watts, Miss Slater's colleague who acted as courier for the ransom drop, told *The Sun* that the journey to deliver the money was a nightmare. He drove through swirling fog, at the direction of the kidnapper, from Birmingham to a bridge near Barnsley, South Yorkshire, where he was ordered to leave the £175,000 on a wooden tray. Mr Watts was in continual contact, via a hidden microphone, with police, but said he still felt "trembly alone and vulnerable".



Artist's impression of Miss Slater's abductor

I wanted to die acid case man says

A HUSBAND accused of killing his wife by putting her in a vat of acid in a locked garage said yesterday that he "just wanted to finish it all" after finding her in bed with another man.

Cecil Jackson, aged 36, described at the Central Criminal Court the moment when he found his wife Dassa, aged 30, with her lover. "I saw her and this geezer in bed and I just felt like everything had just come to an end. I was so shocked. I didn't know what to do."

"I just looked at both of them, turned round, and walked out. I had never seen her with another man before. I just wanted to die," Mr Jackson said that he sat at a railway station thinking

about things. Five months later, in February of last year, he tried to strangle his wife before dumping her in a vat of hydrochloric acid, the court was told. She died in agony in hospital two hours later.

Jackson, a builder, of Forest Gate, east London, admits killing his wife but denies murder. He is defending himself after dismissing his lawyers just before the trial.

Mr Jackson said that his wife had left the family home after a row and he tracked her down to a house in south London. "When I found out where she was I went there in the night," he said. "There was one wooden door which opened outwards. I just braced myself, kicked it down, and ran up the stairs. It was then that he found Dassa in bed with her lover."

The prosecution claims that Mr Jackson murdered his wife by dumping her in the acid so that he could claim £57,000 insurance. Two pensioners found her in the garage sitting in a pool of acid with severe burns.

The trial continues on Monday.

Jealous husband shut wife in shed

FOR 50 years a husband locked his wife in the coal shed or a bedroom of their council house every time he went out. The practice was disclosed after the woman was taken to hospital and told nurses.

The information was passed on to a police domestic violence unit in the area, but as the wife did not make a complaint the South Manchester couple are still together.

The husband, aged 76, had said that he did not want his wife, who is two years younger, talking to other men. WPC Sarah Gathercole said: "She couldn't remember any time during her life when she wasn't locked up, usually in the coal shed, when he went out."

"It was almost as if she had got used to it and for her it was the norm. The case was referred to other agencies and she still lives with her



Deeply upset: Chris Eubank, before the crash, and right, his Range Rover at the scene yesterday

Eubank bailed after death crash

By MATTHEW D'ANCONA

CHRIS Eubank, the world super-middleweight boxing champion, was released on police bail last night after being involved in a car crash which killed a workman on the A23 in West Sussex.

Kevin Lawlor, aged 33, a former foreign legionary, died instantly when he was struck by Mr Eubank's Range Rover at Pease Potage near Crawley, yesterday. The boxer and three passengers, on their way to

Garwick, were treated for minor injuries at the Prince Royal Hospital, Haywards Heath.

Mr Eubank was questioned at Burgess Hill police station. Supr Mark Jordan, station commander, said: "He is to be released on condition that he returns in about six weeks. No charges had been made."

The crash happened 65 minutes before Mr Eubank's British Airways flight was due to leave Gatwick for Ja-

maica at 10.55am. A BA spokesman said: "An hour and a half before take-off is the absolute latest a passenger can book in to be guaranteed a place on the plane."

Mr Jordan said that the boxer was deeply upset about the accident. "Mr Eubank specifically asked officers to pass on his condolences to the dead man's family."

Traffic police were examining the Range Rover to see if a mechanical fault had caused the crash. Simon

Lawlor, the victim's nephew, said: "We can't blame Chris Eubank until we know what happened. If it was an accident, it was an accident. There is nothing you can do about it. The whole family is devastated."

Mr Eubank considered quitting boxing after a title fight with Michael Watson last September left Watson in hospital with brain damage. But he returned to the ring last Saturday, successfully defending his title.

Keays denies revelling in Tory unease

By A STAFF REPORTER

SARA Keays was in tears near the end of nearly 13 hours of cross-examination in her libel case at the High Court yesterday as she described how newspapers had printed "dreadful things" about her.

The ex-mistress of Cecil Parkinson, former Conservative party chairman, goes back into the witness box on Monday when she will be questioned again by her counsel, John Preville, QC.

Yesterday Miss Keays denied that she had revelled in the embarrassment that newspaper serialisation of her story would cause to him and the Tory party.

Miss Keays, whose affair with Mr Parkinson ended in 1983 when she was pregnant with his daughter, also denied an allegation that she had gloated at the effect the serialisation of her book would have on the Conservatives during their 1985 Blackpool conference.

Her denials came on the fifth day of her action against *New Woman* magazine over an article that she claims accuses her of being a kiss-and-tell bimbo who wrote her book, *A Question of Judgement*, to make money and cause maximum embarrassment to Mr Parkinson.

Miss Keays, aged 44, of Marksbury, near Bath, was being cross-examined by Desmond Browne, QC, for the magazine, which denies libel.

She told Mr Justice Drake and the jury that her real purpose had been to defend her reputation against lies told about her. Mr Browne asked her about a telephone conversation she had, before the serialisation began in the *Daily Mirror*, with the newspaper's assistant editor, John Penrose.

Counsel said that Miss Keays, who taped the conversation, had used the phrase: "It is going to be quite an interesting situation" and had then laughed. Miss Keays said: "You will find that I quite often laugh. I often laugh when I am nervous."

She had wanted the delegates in Blackpool, whom she described as "the people who malign me", to read what she had to say.

Mr Browne said that Mr Penrose had later told her that the Conservatives had been "squirming with embarrassment" all week. Her reply was "good" and then she laughed.

Miss Keays said: "It meant my message was getting through. I was pleased my words had been read by members of the Conservative party who had attacked me."

Mr Browne asked Miss Keays to recall past events. "Is it really your case that you have acted with complete discretion?"

Miss Keays replied: "It is, Mr Browne. Yes."

Halifax in £18m plan to rescue borrowers

By RACHEL KELLY
PROPERTY CORRESPONDENT

THE Halifax building society yesterday announced an £18 million mortgage rescue scheme with three housing associations, the second such scheme to be launched.

The Halifax refused to say how many families would be rescued by the mortgage-in-rent scheme, but it is likely to be about 300. The deal is part of plans announced yesterday to keep 3,500 borrowers with arrears in their homes.

The mortgage-in-rent scheme involves the Halifax offering loans to the Bedfordshire Pilgrims Housing Association, Hyde Housing Association and the North British Housing Association and deals with London properties.

The Halifax refused to disclose the reduced interest rate at which it will offer loans to the associations to buy properties from borrowers in arrears. Its spokesman said that the terms were "far more realistic to all parties than those we have seen detailed in the press to date."

Nationwide announced the first mortgage-in-rent rescue, with equity-linked loans at rates from 3.5 per cent to 8 per cent. A *Times* study last week showed that rates may have to be below 6 per cent to permit affordable rents in loan-to-rent plans with housing associations.

The Halifax's other rescue measures include a "shared appreciation mortgage", by which it hopes to help up to 2,000 families making reduced payments and sharing any rise in house value.

Weekend Times, page 15

Vary your pension contributions and many life companies will penalise you.

Hardly Equitable is it?

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

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Witnesses hide identity at joyride inquest

A SCREEN was used to conceal the identity of witnesses at an inquest into the deaths of two joyriders yesterday. The witnesses had feared reprisals after giving evidence at the hearing on Colin Atkins, aged 21, and his passenger Dale Robson, aged 17, whose deaths sparked a wave of riots on the Meadow Well estate in North Shields, Tyne and Wear, last summer.

Atkins and Robson, both of North Shields, died when their stolen Renault Turbo hit a lamp-post and exploded. They were being chased by two officers in a police car at speeds of up to 120mph.

The pathologist who conducted the post-mortem examinations was among those hidden from view at the inquest in Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear, which was overruled by both cars, refused to speak and would only write answers to the coroner's questions.

The inquest was told that Atkins and Robson died from extensive burns and multiple injuries. The crash, last September on a slip-road leading to the Tyne Tunnel near Newcastle upon Tyne, led to nightly riots by youths who blamed the police pursuers for the deaths.

Yesterday, several drivers, identified only by letters, told the inquest that they were overtaken by the Renault, which veered from lane to lane on the Coast Road before swerving on to the slip-road to the tunnel.

Police Constable G, a traffic officer who was a passenger in the police Sierra chasing the joyriders, said that the Renault had been noticed driving through the city suburb of Jesmond at

90mph. He and his colleague followed it along the Coast Road but could not catch it. "We reached our maximum speed of 125mph and were unable to go any faster," he said. "The Renault was still going away from us."

He said that they saw its tail-lights as it veered off down a slip-road where the street lights suddenly went out. "I shouted to the driver of my vehicle to slow down because I believed the Renault had crashed," he said. He grabbed a fire extinguisher from the police car and tried to extinguish the Renault blaze. Motorists said that police warned everybody to stand back as the petrol tank was about to explode.

A police accident specialist, named as Police Constable K, said that the police car was never closer than 150 yards to the Renault and was not on the same road when it crashed. He said: "I am satisfied that no contact took place between the two cars at any time."

Brian Gallon, the North Tyneside coroner, recorded a verdict of accidental death. He said: "It is extremely fortunate there was not a much more serious accident involving other motorists that night, considering the dangerously high speeds involved and the road, which is frequently very busy."

"Unfortunately there have been a number of fast cars stolen in this area in recent months and there have been a number of fatal accidents. I hope that the deaths of these two young men and the dreadful way they died might deter others from similar escapades."



Ground work: Dave Walker, a worm farmer, releasing his stock on the 25-acre Warlands re-filled opencast site in Co Durham where the worms are used to aerate the soil and improve drainage

Carey helps to save trust for ex-offenders

BY RUTH GLEDHILL, RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

THE Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, has helped to save a voluntary agency which provides training for ex-offenders. The Apex Trust, which last week was on the brink of liquidation, is expected to survive as a result of funds pledged by businessmen after a reception hosted by Dr Carey.

Bill Mather, chief executive of the trust, had said that only a "miracle" could save it. The Archbishop is expected to help other threatened charities or institutions in the next year with more behind-the-scenes initiatives.

Baroness Seear, chairwoman of the trust, had appealed to Dr Carey as one of the trust's sponsors after learning that it faced almost certain closure. Her initiative resulted in an emergency meeting with representatives from leading businesses at Lambeth Palace this week, hosted by the Archbishop.

The Apex Trust faced liquidation after the employment

department stopped payments to the trust because it discovered an unauthorised payment of £250,000 was made in April 1991. The department asked for the money back and an administration order was made by the High Court last month.

Apex helps 8,000 people a year. The trust operates on the basis that ex-offenders are three times less likely to commit another offence if they find a job.

Although the trust was profitable, cash flow difficulties were caused by a change in the payment of training grants by training and enterprise councils from advance to arrears funding. The added effect of the department's claim and its withdrawal of funding pushed the organisation over the brink.

Malcolm London of Cork Gully, the administrator, said at least £250,000 was needed to save the trust. "We have made a good start and are optimistic."

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EC report challenges rabies law

FROM TOM WALKER
IN BRUSSELS

EUROPEAN Community veterinary officials in Brussels will next month give a report to the European Commission that will be used to justify replacing Britain's quarantine rules with pet passports.

A committee of vets, drawn from all 12 member countries, yesterday delayed publication of the report, but sources said that only minor details were awaited and that the commission should soon have the justification it needs to challenge Britain's six-month quarantine law.

EC sources say that the commission is likely to recommend that there be no restrictions on taking dogs and cats between rabies-free countries, that those taken from Britain to the Continent and back be vaccinated before departure and given antibody tests, and that those brought from the Continent to Britain be vaccinated six months before departure, kept in isolation by owners and tested.

Babies saved by balloons

BY THOMSON PRENTICE
MEDICAL CORRESPONDENT

SURGEONS have inserted and inflated tiny balloons inside the hearts of babies only a few days old to treat incurable congenital cardiac defects.

A report of what are believed to be the world's first such operations is published in *The Lancet* today by doctors at the Royal Liverpool Children's Hospital, Alder Hey. Four babies, aged from three to eight days, have undergone the procedure in the past few months. Although not a cure in itself, the technique enabled the infants to survive long enough to have more complex, reconstructive heart surgery.

The infants were born with left-heart obstruction, in which an arterial duct closes during the first few days of life, blocking circulation to the rest of the body. About 200 such infants are born in Britain every year and most die within a few days or weeks.

Thunderbirds fan saves Virgil's face

BY ARTHUR LEATHLEY

A 20-YEAR mystery surrounding the whereabouts of one of the most handsome faces of Sixties television has been solved. The disappearance of Virgil Tracey, the debonair pilot in the puppet series *Thunderbirds*, remained a conundrum which would have baffled even the programme's eccentric boffin, Brains.

Most of the original plaster casts of the puppets were kept when the last episodes were filmed at studios in Slough, Berkshire.

Few of the programme's makers gave a second thought, however, to the many props, including Virgil's tanned visage, which were tossed away in rubbish skips in 1971. Strenuous efforts to trace the hazel-eyed pilot of *Thunderbird 2* came to nothing, and puppet maker Christine Glanville resigned herself to making another version of the face.

Then, after appeals for news of Virgil's whereabouts were published in several newspapers, Peter Thornley, once among many Slough children who watched the series being filmed, came forward, clutching the plaster cast he rescued from a skip two decades earlier.

Ms Glanville said last night: "I am absolutely delighted to have Virgil back. Now we have all the original main characters or their casts." She was more coy about whether the belated reunion of the full cast would lead to filming of a new series. "We'll have to see about that."



F.A.B.: the tanned and debonair Virgil Tracey

Tories accuse Labour of concealing policy costs

By ROBIN OAKLEY, POLITICAL EDITOR

THE Conservatives changed tack in their assault on Opposition policies yesterday with Michael Heseltine, the environment secretary, accusing Labour of keeping silent about the costs it would impose on taxpayers in local government.

The Conservatives also predicted that they would capture several Labour seats in London at the election, including that of Ken Livingstone, the former GLC leader.

Mr Heseltine said that the new tier of regional authorities proposed by Labour would cost £270 million a year. Also, Labour had

pledged that £2 billion in extra funds would be made available to local authorities in the coming financial year, the equivalent of an extra £60 on every community charge, or of a penny added to every one's income tax.

Abolishing the uniform business rate and putting business rates back into the hands of local authorities would mean there was no limit to the increases which could be imposed on the business community by high-spending authorities, he said. By ending capping, a Labour government would ensure that every council in the country would have a blank cheque.

Mr Heseltine said that the average community charge in England was £80 higher in Labour controlled areas than in Conservative controlled ones after taking into account the effects of the area protection grant. The difference was £60 in metropolitan boroughs, £80 in the shire districts, and £130 in London.

Kinnock condemns 'blunders'

NEIL Kinnock last night attacked the Conservatives for 13 years of "incompetence" which had left Britain scarred by poverty, disadvantage and insecurity. In a speech to more than 1,500 Labour councillors, Mr Kinnock said that people were asking what the Tories had to show for their years in power.

"They've run through £100 billion worth of North Sea oil revenues. They've run through £34 billion of privatisation proceeds," he said. "At the end of it all, they have higher unemployment, wider poverty, rundown services, closed industries, greater insecurity and homelessness."

He told the party's local government conference in Blackpool that Mr Major would leave Britain with the economic "blunders" of skill shortages in the midst of mass unemployment, a balance of trade deficit in the middle of a slump and a collapse in investment in Europe's only oil-rich economy. "It all shows a gift for incompetence that is in the prodigy class," he said.

Mr Kinnock condemned the planned council tax replacement for the poll tax as a "mesetine tax" cobbled together by Mr Major and Michael Heseltine, the environment secretary. He said that Labour's "Fair Rates" scheme would be related to people's ability to pay, would stop evasion, be cheap and efficient to administer, improve the accountability of local government and give value for money as well as value for people.

Nine of the ten areas with the worst community charge collection rates were Labour controlled, with one independent. Several Labour boroughs "suspected of being among the worst offenders", such as Lambeth, Southwark, Liverpool and Manchester, had not filled in the forms from which the list was compiled.

On Labour's proposals for replacing the poll tax, Mr Heseltine said: "We hear they plan a new type of property tax, with a whole range of values taken into account - capital values, rental values, insurance values, rebuilding costs. And, just for good measure, their spokesman in the Lords, Lord McIntosh of Haringey, has added a link to household incomes. For each and every home, for each and every person liable to pay, five separate calculations."

At the same London press conference, Michael Portillo, the local government minister, said that Labour's record of high tax, waste and poor services in local government would ensure that the Conservatives won seats from Labour in the capital in the general election.

In recent council by-elections in Hackney and Lambeth, he said, there had been swings from Labour to Conservative of 20 and 25 per cent. He listed as Labour's vulnerable seats Tooting (Tom Cox), Newham South (Nigel Spearing) and Brent East (Ken Livingstone).

Forgotten medieval hall gains new lease of life

By PETER DAVENPORT

DOWN a narrow alley off historic Stonegate in the centre of York, dwarfed by the imposing bulk of the Minster, Paul Simons and his team of carpenters are following in the footsteps of craftsmen 600 years ago to recreate a forgotten medieval building.

More than 520 pieces of oak timbers, 47 of them rescued from the original 14th century construction, have been manhandled onto the site in Coffee Yard before being hoisted into place on a specially constructed crane, with only 1.5m between surrounding walls and the largest, swinging beams. 26ft long and weighing 1,900lb.

The project has been more than a year in the planning, from research and selection of trees to prefabrication off site and now assembly. The three-storey section under construction is the oldest part of a great timber-framed house, now known as Barley Hall, dating from the 14th and 15th centuries. Built as a monastic hospice for Nostell Priory, near Wakefield, it was later leased as a residence to wealthy York citizens.

Despite its location in York's centre, the hall had been forgotten for several centuries. Over the decades, poor quality brick additions and makeshift repairs had disguised its age and nature. By the 1980s, it appeared to be no more than a run-down plumbers' workshop, due for demolition.

Only when a conservation architect, Russell Wright, examined the building was its significance recognised. In 1987 it was bought by the York Archaeological Trust,



Back to the future: workmen planing timbers, above, for reconstruction of medieval Barley Hall, York, in artist's impression below

which commissioned the painstakingly accurate reconstruction that is now taking place.

Dendrochronology, or tree-ring dating, has established that the timber for the three-storey north wing of the L-shaped hall was felled in the spring of 1360, in the reign of Edward III.

McCurdy and Co. of Reading, Berkshire, a specialist in the care of timber-framed buildings, was engaged for the reconstruction. It built the frame at its factory before each section was transported to York. Assembly began last weekend and the timber skeleton should be complete by early next week.

Paul Simons, a director of McCurdy, says that its carpenters have learnt much about the skills of their medieval predecessors. "It is a

very restricted site to work on, just as it was in their day and in many ways we are following the same construction methods," he said. "The main difference is that they would have hoisted the large sections above ground with a block and tackle while we have imported a special crane from Italy."

The building is being assembled with 25 types of joint, the same as those used by the earlier carpenters, and reinforced with 1,500 oak pegs.

Restoration of the outer shell of Barley Hall, including its later two-storey section, is due to be completed by late spring. York Archaeological Trust intends to make the building a working medieval household for visitors, but that part of the programme depends on the success of a £1.2 million appeal.



Anti-EC group to contest seats

By SHEILA GUNN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

LEADERS of a group opposed to a federal Europe yesterday described John Major as the most incompetent prime minister since the war.

Alan Sked and Tim Hedges, who will stand against cabinet ministers in the election, accused Mr Major and Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, of destroying the Tories' record for competent financial management and defence of the national interest, by signing

for closer European unity. Launching their campaign at a Westminster press conference, the two men announced the first three candidates to stand for the Anti-Federalist League. Thirty-six more candidates are expected to be announced soon. They will stand in seats, usually marginals, where all the other contenders support the Maastricht treaty.

Dr Sked, professor of history at the London School of Economics, will contest Bath where Mr Patten, Conservative party chairman, has a 1,412 majority. An open letter to the voters accuses Mr Patten of deriding Britain's independence.

Mr Hedges, a business consultant, will stand in Bristol West against William Waldegrave, the health secretary, (majority 7,703) and Rodney Atkinson, a merchant banker, will fight Hexham (Tory majority 8,066). Dr Sked said that the league was expecting to field a candidate in Wallasey where Lynda Chalker, the overseas development minister, has a majority of 279.

Although Dr Sked denied that his candidates were disaffected Tories, they are likely to split the Conservative vote. He said that he had talked to Margaret Thatcher about his election challenge and said that the former prime minister had not tried to dissuade him from fielding candidates.

Treaty signed, page 9

Timeshare curbs nearer

By JOHN WINDER

TIMESHARE companies that use high pressure sales tactics to coerce customers into signing agreements may be forced to allow a 14-day "cooling off" period. Any operator not informing buyers of this right to cancel would face fines of up to £2,000.

The Commons yesterday gave an unopposed second reading to the timeshare bill proposed by Andrew Hunter, Conservative MP for Basingstoke. With support from the government and the Opposition, the bill could go through Parliament before the election, although it may be superseded by European Community legislation. Mr

Hunter said that there were about 10,000 complaints a year and that the behaviour of timeshare companies varied from the unethical to the edge of fraudulent.

Edward Leigh, consumer affairs minister, said: "A substantial minority of sellers of timeshare have used methods which by any standards are unethical and are unacceptable and threaten to bring the whole industry into disrepute. It is right that Parliament should step in and call a halt. The government is offering its full support."

There was a gap in trade descriptions legislation on misleading indications to

consumers, which the government intended to plug after a general review of the Trade Descriptions Act, now in progress. His department received more complaints about timeshare than any other industry.

A bill intended to crack down on cheque frauds completed its passage through the Commons yesterday and stands a chance of becoming law. The private member's bill is sponsored by Conal Gregory, Tory MP for York, who believes it would prevent millions of pounds being lost to thieves who transfer cheques into "laundry" accounts.

Lawyer in court on £4.5m theft charge

A solicitor appeared in court yesterday accused of stealing £4.5 million from clients. Philip Englefield, aged 48, is alleged to have taken the money over two years when he was a senior partner with a firm in London.

Mr Englefield was arrested at his home in South Kensington, west London, on Thursday. He faces seven charges of theft, false accounting and deception relating to money missing from customers' accounts.

He was remanded on bail by Bow Street magistrates, central London, after his mother agreed to put up a £50,000 surety. He was ordered to surrender his passport.

Aids virus man accused

A man with the Aids virus has been charged with attempting to harm seriously a policeman by spitting blood at him. The man, aged 21, is accused of attempting to cause grievous bodily harm and with causing actual bodily harm to Detective Constable Neil Nugent of Chelsea police station, west London.

The man, of Chelsea, is also charged of having unlawful sexual intercourse with a minor. He cannot be named for legal reasons. He was remanded in custody by Horseferry Road magistrates, central London.

Killer jailed

A driver who killed two men as he overtook on a pedestrian crossing was jailed for two years and banned from driving for three years by Stafford crown court. Peter Wilks, aged 23, of Tipton, West Midlands, admitted causing death by reckless driving.

Low turn-out

A primary school with 270 places opened on a new estate at Hamilton, Leicester, for just 13 pupils yesterday. David Axton, the head teacher, blamed the recession for slowing sales of houses on the estate.

Rabbits offside

The Walterswick village football team in Suffolk, has been given a £1,500 council grant to help to pay for a fence to keep burrowing rabbits off the pitch.

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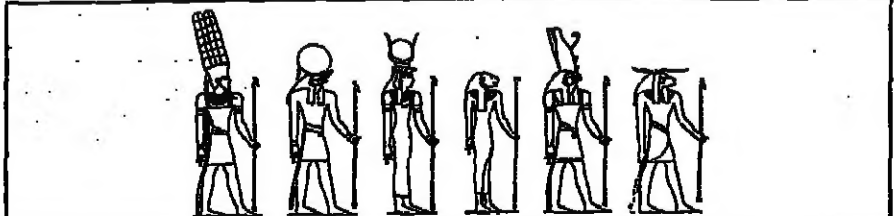
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Woman deacon accuses gay clergy

By RUTH GLEDHILL RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

A WOMAN deacon in the Church of England has accused homosexual priests in the London diocese of promiscuity. She also suggests that much of the opposition to women priests comes from homosexual clergy. Church leaders are concerned that as the final vote on the ordination of women approaches in November, the debate will descend into mudslinging.

The Rev Nerissa Jones, curate at St Botolph's, Aldgate, central London, says in a television programme to be broadcast tomorrow that more than a third of London priests are homosexual and few are celibate. "Many congregations would be quite appalled to know that a couple of nights a week their vicar, dear Father So-and-so, is actually coming about London. It would not be good. It is not a godly life," Mrs

Jones added this week. "As a heterosexual grandmother and clergywoman, I talk to many people about their private lives, and often find that if men cannot openly accept their homosexuality they are more likely to be antagonistic to women."

The London diocese led the opposition to women priests under its former bishop, the Rt Rev Graham Leonard. The new Bishop of London, David Hope, opposes the legislation but, unlike some of his junior bishops, encourages the ministry of women deacons. In the same edition of the BBC1 series *Everyman*, Dr Hope describes a "considerable degree of homophobia" in the church and society.

The bishop speaks of "clear and high standards expected of sacrifice and discipline" on the part of homosexuals and heterosexuals. "Christians ought to be affirming the value and dignity of each and every human being created

in the likeness and image of God."

The Archdeacon of London, the Ven George Cassidy, said: "There are many people who appear to be of a homosexual inclination who are bitterly opposed to the ordination of women. It is true that they have a preponderance in the London diocese."

The new bishop has breathed a marvellous new breath of fresh air and spiritual vision into the diocese. It will be rather sad if people with their own agendas, motivated for whatever reason, try to develop new polarities and mudslinging."

Richard Kirker, of the Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement, said: "There are undoubtedly more lesbian and gay clergy in London than in any other diocese. You cannot with credibility argue for the ordination of women and not homosexuals, or vice versa."

Naked truth? Weekend Times, page 3

Islamabad seeks renewed US aid

Pakistan confesses bomb capability

BY OUR FOREIGN STAFF

PAKISTAN has for the first time admitted that it has the components and expertise to assemble at least one nuclear bomb.

Marking the first time a Pakistani official has publicly acknowledged the extent of the country's nuclear programme, Shahryar Khan, the senior official at the foreign ministry in Islamabad, told *The Washington Post* in an interview published yesterday: "The capability is there." The interview was conducted after Mr Khan assured American officials that his country would not explode a nuclear device or sell the technology to another country.

He said that the components in Pakistan's possession included "elements which, if put together, would become a device". These included potential weapons cores fashioned from highly enriched uranium. Mr Khan said that he was acknowledging the extent of Pakistan's nuclear programme in order to close "credibility gaps" arising from past official denials of attempts to develop an atomic weapon.

Disbelief of those denials led the US Congress in 1990 to order a ceiling of some \$573 million (£318 million) in aid to Pakistan. Mr Khan said leaders of the government, which came to power in



Gates: CIA was aware of nuclear potential

October 1990, had decided to set the record straight in an attempt to win a resumption of American aid.

He said that he had not been told how many nuclear devices could be assembled from the components, but added that his government last year permanently froze production of new weapons cores. Destruction of the existing cores is one of Washington's conditions for resumption of aid, but Mr Khan said that Pakistan would destroy them only if India did the same.

Robert Gates, the director of the CIA, told a Senate hearing in Washington on January 15 that "we have no reason to believe that either

India or Pakistan maintains assembled or deployed nuclear bombs. But such weapons could be assembled quickly, and both countries have combat aircraft that could be modified to deliver them in a crisis".

The International Atomic Energy Agency said yesterday that four of its high-ranking officials had been invited by Iran to discuss Tehran's nuclear programme amid reports that it is also seeking to develop nuclear weapons. The officials had left for Iran on Thursday and were expected to hold talks with Iranian officials and visit known nuclear research sites in and around Tehran.

"They are there for discussions but if the Iranians want to take them someplace for a look then they'll do this," said David Kydd, an agency spokesman. Diplomats said Iran might be trying to use the visit to dispel Western concerns about its nuclear weapons ambitions.



Team spirit: President Aquino and her presidential candidate, Fidel Ramos, the former defence minister, acknowledging supporters at a rally in Manila yesterday. The three-month campaign begins in earnest today, and at stake is not just the question of who will succeed Mrs Aquino, but also 17,200 posts from national to village

level (Abby Tan writes from Manila). Election officials estimate that at least 200,000 candidates will enter the fray. Considering the publicity that has gone into the preparations, the May 11 election promises to be the freest since independence in 1946. Imelda Marcos has returned from exile and is eager to run as a

presidential candidate — even while on trial for more than 50 criminal charges. Mrs Aquino is stepping down after six years in office. She says her democratic reforms are complete. Her candidate is pitted against Ramon Mitra of the Philippine Democratic Struggle party and Eduardo Cojuangco, a Marcos sympathiser.

Li returns to hero's welcome

FROM CATHERINE SAMPSON IN PEKING

LI PENG, the Chinese prime minister, was given a hero's welcome on his return to Peking yesterday after his first trip to the West since the suppression of the democracy movement in 1989.

His name is closely linked with army repression, being the man who declared martial law in 1989 and who raged in public against the pro-democracy students. But Mr Li's increasingly prominent international profile makes it unlikely that the Communist party will feel it necessary to remove him from the post of prime minister. Shortly after the Tiananmen Square massacre, Chinese and foreign analysts had expected him to be made a scapegoat.

Local television reports of his travels did not mention that he had encountered criticism of his country's human rights record throughout the tour, which included attendance at the United Nations Security Council summit. Also omitted was that protesters had forced him to cancel talks in Barcelona.

Cabinet minister challenges clergy

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN ISLAMABAD

PAKISTAN'S fundamentalists are facing a challenge to their power, both from within the government and the new-looking liberalised army. The moves are intended to reverse a trend towards greater Islamisation that has gone on for more than 40 years.

Exasperation with the hardliners has grown after an Islamic court's ruling that all financial transactions must be conducted without charging interest. This would render the banking system unworkable and practically wipe out foreign investment. It would also disrupt the work of international aid agencies.

Two banks, one government-owned, have appealed to the supreme court against the ruling, which is due to be implemented in June. Sardar Asif Ahmed Ali, the minister of state for economic affairs, said this week that in the meantime there would be deep uncertainty, damaging Pakistan's economy. "Questions about this ruling are being asked by foreign investors," he said. "For the first time, Pakistan has a chance to break out of its isolation and open its doors to free-market forces and integrate with the world economy, but this court decision could take that chance away."

He said it was time to challenge the fundamental-

ists, who wielded power far beyond their electoral mandate. "Parliament, the administration, the civil service and the army are all fed up with them. This represents a remarkable change for Pakistan. The die is cast; there is no going back now."

Sardar Asif said Pakistan's change of policy over Afghanistan amounted to a rejection of the fundamentalist position. Pakistan had started to make "rational decisions rather than fundamentalist decisions".

Sardar Asif, who recently toured Central Asia, said there had been concern there that Pakistan had backed fundamentalist mujahedin groups in Afghanistan. The republics felt that President Najibullah represented the forces of progress in Afghanistan, and should be supported.

The army is now headed by a liberal, General Asif Nawaz, who seems determined to reduce the influence of the fundamentalists. Much of their power was institutionalised by President Zia, the former dictator. Mian Nawaz Sharif, the prime minister, who wants to promote Pakistan as a modern, economically liberal Islamic state, will have to move cautiously to prevent a fundamentalist backlash.

Vietnam sticks to the old red road

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN HANOI

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the world seemed to fall apart for Nguyen Phuong Minh, a Communist party of Vietnam ideologue and holder of the Order of Anti-American Resistance. "It was a nightmare, a hurt and a sadness for those who believe in communism, especially for Vietnamese communists," she said.

"We grew up on the Soviet experience and the assistance from the Soviet Union during our wars of liberation. Suddenly it was not there any more."

This week the country celebrated the 62nd anniversary of the founding by the late President Ho Chi Minh of the Indochinese Communist party, precursor of the Communist party of Vietnam. Red banners strung across main streets in Hanoi proclaimed "Long Live the glorious Communist party of Vietnam" mingled with decorations celebrating Tet, the lunar new year festival.

There is something anachronistic about the Marxist slogans. At the same time, nobody is saying communism is going to disappear in Vietnam overnight. "We have to

think in what way we will have to renovate the party and our country," said Vu Hien of the authoritative *Review of Communism*. "Only by this can we assure the realisation of communism in Vietnam."

The disappearance of Soviet and East bloc aid of \$880 million is a blow, but Vietnam has been exporting rice since 1989 and oil revenues are on stream. "Many older people still can't believe what happened," said a younger official. "They suddenly lost their point of reference. Younger party members are more pragmatic. They don't see it as the end of the world."

With market-orientated economic reforms under the "renovation" policies instituted in 1986, living standards are rising. People have money in their pockets to buy Tet flowers, food delicacies and alcohol. "Tactical flexibility and the ability to make concessions saved the party," said one diplomat. "By and large most people in Vietnam are better off than they have even been. It's the best (time) Tet people in Hanoi and most of the country have had in their lives."

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Defence casts Tyson in role of rampant sexual predator



Washington: described as sexually aware

TWO weeks into his rape trial, Mike Tyson allowed himself a few grim smiles yesterday as he listened to lawyers casting him as a rampant sexual predator whose approach to women is about as delicate as the smash and grab of the caveman in old cartoon strips. The boxer, who faces a possible six decades in an Indiana prison if convicted, was savouring the considerable irony because the damning portrait came not from Greg Garrison, the swaggering prosecutor, but from Vincent Fuller, the boxer's own counsel, and his multimillion dollar team. In an odd reversal of roles, Tyson the primitive brute has emerged as the main weapon of the defence in Indianapolis. For three days they called a stream of beauty contestants and members of the boxer's entourage to report on his courtship techniques. The

The black versus black trial is failing to ignite the powerful public passions of the Kennedy Smith case, writes Charles Bremner from Indianapolis

point was to show that Desiree Washington, a competitor at the Miss Black America pageant last July, fully knew what was in store when she visited the boxer's hotel room at 2am. On his side, Mr Garrison has taken on the implausible job of casting the pugilist as a civilised fellow whose rough manner with beauty queens was just a Brooklyn version of cocktail party banter. This argument helps defuse suspicions that "she asked for it". A single image has loomed over the tiny court for days, bolstered by a videotape broadcast on national television: this was Tyson's ill-fated visit to the contestants

at the pageant, an event that seems to have been less a publicity stunt for the boxer than a sexual shopping expedition. "Mike was basically putting the moves on the contestants... he was grabbing their bottoms," Johnnie Gill, gospel blues singer and friend, told the court yesterday. Miss Virginia described how the boxer cursed her when she refused an invitation, offered in front of the other contestants, to have sex with him. Ms Washington, aged 18 and apparently less "streetwise" than the other contestants, was the only one to offer her telephone number. When Tyson grabbed the

behind of a contestant and said: "A kiss will do, but sex will be better," this was just his way of breaking the ice, according to Mr Garrison, a freelance "hired gun" prosecutor whose loud "Aw shucks" cowboy-style has visibly begun to grate on the nerves of Judge Patricia Clifford. Tyson's sexual invitation was allegedly made to Tanya Trainor, who told the court yesterday that the boxer used profanity in the vernacular sense. "Like when he said he was going to talk with the other girls, he said to me 'I'm going to go and f--- with them'."

"You mean he was nice and polite and congenial," asked Mr Garrison. "Yeah," said Ms Trainor, who said she admired the respect the boxer showed for the contestants. The beauty queens have poured acid on Ms Washington's image as the wronged maiden, reporting

her as money-hungry, sexually aware and scornful of what she saw as Tyson's low intellectual wattage. But Mr Garrison has managed to blunt the damage by extracting from all of them a vision of her as starstruck before Tyson's celebrity. The boxer's own testimony, the most-awaited event in the trial, could radically alter events, but in the view of the platoon of retired judges and trial experts the choice for the jury has been narrowed to a moral dilemma. Since it has been established that Ms Washington led the boxer on, can they convict him and send him to prison purely on her word that she refused her consent once she was sitting on his bed? Perhaps America has tired of the endless public feuding over "date rape" or perhaps the racial element and lack of television coverage has muted the impact of the Tyson

trial. But it has so far escaped the dimension of national psychodrama and soap opera which rose from the prosecution of William Kennedy Smith. Instead of an American parable, it is being viewed as something of a grotesque sideshow and relegated to the ghetto of the sports pages of those newspapers which are reporting it. Black commentators see racism rampant in the disdain shown by America at large, but they are also upset over the sordid images emerging from a black-on-black case. "I don't like all those white guys sitting in judgment," said a spectator in Indianapolis, referring to the whiteness of all lawyers, the judge and all but two jurors. "They aren't qualified to judge us like that." Unease over race was visible in the pained expression of Mayor Stephen Goldsmith of Indianapolis when he was assaulted with Tyson questions as he opened an exhibition in the foyer of the court building this week. "You know, a lot of very positive things are happening here in Indianapolis," he said. That was a day before fire forced the jury to flee their hotel in which three people died, and before a military plane crashed into a hotel south of the state capital killing 16. For city officials, already beset by a local economic depression, it was all an amazing coincidence. But for many, all the misfortunes of the week had some maybe metaphysical link with the descent in their midst of the former world heavyweight champion and a pageant of beauty queens last July. "It's the curse of Tyson," they joked gloomily in a doughnut shop as a snowstorm added to the grey of winter in the Midwest.

Focus shifts from Third World agenda

Top UN jobs go in pro-Western move

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

A WEEK after a United Nations Security Council summit called on Boutros Boutros Ghali, the UN secretary-general, to revamp the organisation, he announced sweeping changes yesterday that left blood on the carpet. Dr Boutros Ghali made deep cuts in the upper echelons of the top-heavy UN secretariat, moving the focus of UN activities away from the Third World agenda of economic development onto the West's concern with political and security affairs. Fourteen of the 48 UN officials in the top two tiers of the secretariat — the ranks of under-secretary-general or as-

sistant secretary-general — lost their jobs. Many departments were abolished or combined in what a UN spokesman said was only the "first stage" of the restructuring. Dr Boutros Ghali, an Egyptian, ignored a much-touted plan put forward by an informal group of 30 UN ambassadors, led by Australia's Peter Wilenski, which envisaged the creation of only four second-tier posts. But the changes in the secretariat were the most drastic in many years, rivalled only by the so-called "Hallowe'en massacre" of 1986. Almost all the economic departments were condensed into a single

department of economic development, which is to be headed by Ji Chaozhu of China. By contrast, the political and security role of the organisation was reinforced. The peacekeeping department run by the highest-ranking Brion in the UN system, Marrack Goulding, was strengthened with the addition of a new deputy. The assistant secretary-general, Kofi Annan of Ghana, will help Mr Goulding manage the huge expansion in UN peacekeeping operations, soon to include the despatch of thousands of troops to Cambodia and Yugoslavia. The UN peacemaking role, previously a task of the secretary-general's own office, is to be devolved into two new political departments, likely to emerge as the powerhouse of the United Nations.

One of the two new departments for political affairs will be headed by James Jonah, an under-secretary general and a long-serving UN official from Sierra Leone who ran unsuccessfully last year for election as secretary-general. He will be assisted by Giandomenico Pico, the UN trouble-shooter who was promoted late last year after securing the release of the Western hostages in Lebanon. The other political department will run by Vladimir Petrovsky, a former Soviet deputy foreign minister who used to head the UN division of the Soviet foreign ministry. A noted innovator, Mr Petrovsky is expected to play a key role in drafting the report on reshaping the UN requested by John Major and the other leaders at last week's summit.

The two new political departments are expected to assume the key functions of early warning and arms control identified by the security council summit last week. Two established UN officials are also likely to emerge as key players in UN reform. Jean-Claude Aime, a Haitian, the leading UN Middle East specialist, was named as Dr Boutros Ghali's chief of staff. He was not, however, promoted to under-secretary-general, the rank held by the present incumbent, because Dr Boutros Ghali did not want him to emerge as a clear second-in-command.

Alvaro de Soto of Peru, who negotiated the recent El Salvador peace accords, will serve as the secretary-general's senior political adviser. The top-ranking American at the United Nations, Ronald Spenser, saw his department of general assembly affairs abolished. The report said that "urgent and effective steps should be taken to educate and explain to all members the absolute necessity of unbiased policing". The injudicious use of strong-arm methods led to a perception by the public that the police were a law unto themselves. Orders should be given immediately to stop police carrying out raids on the homes of township residents at night in plain clothes, without search warrants and in vehicles with false number plates. "These factors generate hostility towards the police and feed the grievance... that black people are treated as second class citizens," the report said.



Upping the tempo: President Bush, who jogs daily, sprinting against Treva Williams, the Olympic heptathlon qualifier, in Las Vegas to promote his plan to help millions who cannot afford health insurance

Autonomy change by Shamir

JERUSALEM: Israel yesterday appeared to be distancing itself from its previous commitments to offer Palestinians autonomy in the occupied territories under the Camp David accord of 1978 (Richard Heaton writes).

The apparent shift in policy was set out by Yitzhak Shamir, the prime minister, in an interview published yesterday, in which he backed away from the provisions of the historic peace agreement.

"We are not obliged to every word written there. Time has passed and things have changed," said Mr Shamir, who defended his position by adding that "generally we are bound by what we say".

The remarks are possibly intended to ease right-wing concerns about the autonomy plan before the June general elections in Israel.

Bread aid

LONDON: Britain has announced a £5 million project to reform Moscow's baking industry. The work is to be carried out by Andersen Consulting in association with companies including Rank, Hovis McDougall, J Sainsbury and British Airways.

Curbs lifted

LONDON: The Co-ordinating Council for Multilateral Export Controls (Cocomb) has lifted all restrictions on trade in high technology and militarily sensitive goods with Hungary, but has kept bans on such trade with Poland and Czechoslovakia.

Muslim unrest

ALGERIA: Violence erupted in at least six Algerian cities yesterday in a defiant challenge by Muslim fundamentalists to hundreds of troops and riot police. Algeria's collective presidency has banned gatherings outside mosques. (Reuters)

Arson enquiry

HONG KONG: The government here is to launch an independent enquiry into this week's arson attack at a camp for Vietnamese boat people in which 22 people died. Sir David Wilson, the governor, said the enquiry would be conducted quickly. (Reuters)

Paying out

MAJURO: America is paying almost \$11 million (£6.1 million) to Marshall Island residents suffering from thyroid tumours, radiation exposure and cancers caused by US atomic tests, according to a report by the nuclear claims tribunal. (Reuters)

Youth recovers

MINNEAPOLIS: An American teenager who dived for help with a pencil clenched in his teeth after his arms were cut off in a farm accident showed how he can now move the reattached limbs. Doctors said John Thompson would go home in two weeks. (Reuters)

Webbed feet

SYDNEY: An Australian office worker survived being bitten by a deadly funnel-web spider after he had walked around for more than three hours with it in his shoe. Doctors said the cramped spider could not unleash its full dose of poison. (Reuters)

Skin divers

VANCOUVER: A Canadian group plans to host nude bungee-jumping into a river in spite of threats of prosecution. Bungee-jumpers dive with their ankles bound by a strap attached to rubber cord, stopping short of the ground. (Reuters)

Peking tails media 'spies'

FROM CATHERINE SAMPSON IN PEKING

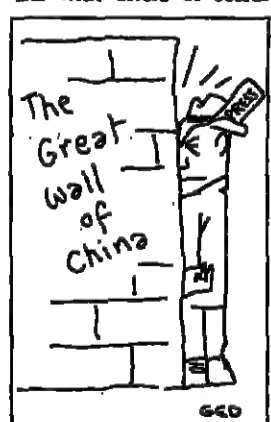
MOSCOW'S KGB may be at a loose end but Peking's State Security Bureau is keeping busy spending a huge amount of time, petrol and manpower following foreign journalists. It is not unusual in the course of a 45-minute drive across the city to spy dozen people involved in the surveillance operation. Such is the influence of the bureau in China's corridors of power that it has amassed a fleet of black Mercedes-Benz cars, as well as a less impressive collection of small, orange motor cycles and bicycles — presumably ridden by those who have not yet earned a comfortable seat in a Mercedes. At the bottom of the surveillance ladder are the men, young and old, who stand on corners and mutter into walkie-talkies as a journalist's car goes by.

Further from the capital, official paranoia becomes even more intense. Foreign journalists are banned from leaving Peking to report on other areas unless they win provincial approval first. Even areas that are designated "windows to the world" will refuse permission and some officials are very imaginative. I was told by Tibetan officials that I could not go there because there was "too little oxygen".

Why does the bureau bother so much? Partly to

create fat, fact-packed files which might prove useful if the bureau wants to make a case against a certain journalist, or one of their Chinese contacts. The authorities also know they cannot control what the foreign press prints in the same way they control Chinese editors and they believe foreign journalists are spies.

The State Security Bureau tries to trap journalists with offers of secret documents for sale. I met a man who claimed to be an army officer. "My nephew wants to go abroad to study," he said. I thought to myself how can I, a simple army officer, make money? Then I thought I can sell state secrets. Would you like some army documents? It was not clear whether he was a simple-minded bureau officer or just plain simple-minded.



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Police bias to Inkatha attacked

FROM RAY KENNEDY IN JOHANNESBURG

SEVERE criticism of apparent police bias in favour of the Zulu-based Inkatha Freedom party (IFP) has been made in a judicial report into clashes last year in Natal province in which 19 people died. The report was tabled in parliament yesterday.

The Goldstone Commission's committee on mass demonstrations — headed by Mr Justice Richard Goldstone and set up under the peace accord signed by the government, the African National Congress (ANC), the Inkatha party and other key political groups — concerned a specific outbreak of violence at Mooi river, Natal, last December. It said evidence given to the committee suggesting that members of the police in the area favoured Inkatha supporters was a matter of concern.

The report said that "urgent and effective steps should be taken to educate and explain to all members the absolute necessity of unbiased policing". The injudicious use of strong-arm methods led to a perception by the public that the police were a law unto themselves. Orders should be given immediately to stop police carrying out raids on the homes of township residents at night in plain clothes, without search warrants and in vehicles with false number plates. "These factors generate hostility towards the police and feed the grievance... that black people are treated as second class citizens," the report said.

Harkin's presidential goal puts Iowa in the shade

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

FOUR years ago there was not a piglet in Iowa safe from the cuddles of one of the 13 presidential candidates dashing manically around the state in search of photo-opportunities. This year they are rooting in the mud in peace.

On Monday the first real votes of the 1992 presidential elections will be cast in the Iowa caucuses, but America could not care less. In 1976 these curious little political gatherings in 2,300 homes, churches and community halls across the state launched Jimmy Carter's triumphant campaign for the White House. In 1988 they nearly killed George Bush's campaign at birth, putting him third behind Robert Dole and the Moral Majority's Pat Robertson. This year President Bush is unchallenged, and the presence of Tom Harkin, Iowa's senator, on the Democrats' slate has killed the event stone dead.

Senator Harkin has not necessarily done his state a favour. In 1988 the candidates spent an estimated 999 days campaigning in Iowa, bringing with them more than 3,000 reporters and half the satellite television news trucks in the country.

This year no candidate save Mr Harkin has been spotted here in weeks. The occasional reporter has turned up to report that there is no story. Hotels, restaurants, television stations and car rental companies have been deprived of their quadrennial bonanza, and this dull farm state of its brief moment in the limelight. The Hotel Savery in Des Moines, a favourite poli-

tical watering-hole, says it has lost \$150,000 (£83,000).

No-one can win in Iowa this year, not even Mr Harkin. There can only be losers. If Mr Harkin's home state failed to hand him an overwhelming victory, and he needs at least 60 per cent, it would deal a possibly fatal blow to his struggling national effort. Failure by Bob Kerrey, the senator from neighbouring Nebraska, to

engulfed in fresh controversy on Thursday over allegations that he dodged the draft for the Vietnam war.

Those allegations, and his denials, received extensive but largely non-committal coverage in all major American newspapers yesterday, and Vice-President Dan Quayle, who faced similar charges himself in 1988, fanned the flames by calling for the same intense scrutiny of Mr Clinton's record that he had endured. Mr Harkin, referring to unproven allegations against Mr Clinton of adultery, said that the last thing the Arkansas governor needed now was "another story questioning his veracity and character".

Mr Bush's plan for reforming America's health care system, unveiled on Thursday, touched off an intense and long-overdue debate on this hottest of electoral issues, with a deep ideological divide opening up between Democrats favouring some form of national insurance and Republicans supporting a private market-driven system.

The Democratic presidential hopefuls exoriated the Bush plan. Mr Clinton claimed that Mr Bush wanted to fix the election, not the health care system. Mr Kerrey called it "medical Darwinism, the survival of the fittest". The only real consensus was that in an election year neither Mr Bush nor members of Congress would dare tackle the real nub of the debate — how to finance a better system without raising taxes or cutting existing benefits.



Harkin: needs big victory in home state

secure second place would be seen as a further setback for his faltering campaign.

In New Hampshire, the beneficiary of Iowa's demise, a USA Today/CNN poll yesterday showed Mr Bush leading Patrick Buchanan by 62 per cent to 30, with 11 days until the primary. Bill Clinton led the Democrats with 37 per cent, with Paul Tsongas on 24, Mr Kerrey on 12, Mr Harkin and Jerry Brown on 8. However, the poll had been conducted before Mr Clinton was

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QUEEN ELIZABETH2

Liberals act to counter fascist rise in Russia

FROM BRUCE CLARK IN MOSCOW

MOSCOW'S streets will echo this weekend to the sound of chanting demonstrators for the first time since the August coup, as pro-Western reformers and orthodox communists compete in an atmosphere of political ferment.

Yelena Bonner, Andrei Sakharov's widow, and a host of distinguished liberals have lent their support to a rally at the White House, the parliament that last summer became a symbol of Russian democracy. Organisers hope

that at least 70,000 members of Moscow's "middle class in waiting" — those well-educated and Western-oriented people whose peaceful protests helped oust the Communist party — will turn out to denounce the re-emerging spectre of totalitarianism.

The rally will hear warnings about the "red-brown" menace: the prospect of an unholy alliance between old-style communists and Russian nationalists, cemented by nostalgia for authoritarianism and suspicion of all things Western and Jewish. Liberals acted after communists threatened a "march on the White House" in protest against the break-up of the Soviet Union and the hardship brought by economic reform. The Russian Communist Workers' Party has since been told by the city council to switch the venue of its demonstration to Manezh Square, outside the Kremlin.

Both the rallies will hear denunciations of Russia's new elite — figures from the communist establishment who, in the name of "privatisation", are carving out lucrative positions in Moscow's new stock and commodity markets. The communists want "direct control by working people" of "hard currency" obtained by the financial plundering of state enterprises. The liberals want the "former communist nomenklatura capitalists" to be replaced, with a more level economic playing field open to foreign and Russian players.

They argue that without transparent, rapid procedures for privatisation, wildcat seizures by opportunistic bureaucrats are more likely. Activists such as Vladimir Bokser, a doctor and middle-class protest movement, think that of the two parts of the "red-brown" menace, the "brown" or neo-fascist one is more dangerous.

A congress of "patriotic forces" is expected to be addressed by Aleksandr Rutskoi, the vice-president of Russia, and other Yeltsinists who have recently donned moderate nationalist colours. The congress will demand a tough line against Ukraine, which yesterday rejected calls by Russia's parliament for the Black Sea Fleet to remain united under the Commonwealth of Independent States. Delegates will also call on Russia to pursue its own economic interests in dealing with other republics.

Dr Bokser believes an alliance is emerging between the nationalists and the nomenklatura capitalists bent on keeping foreign money out.

Leading article, page 11



Bonner: supporting rally by reformers



Pressure on Baku leader grows

FROM ANATOL LIEVEN IN BAKU

PRESSURE is increasing on the government of President Muzalibov of Azerbaijan as the death toll from fighting in the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh mounts.

In the past two days, a stormy meeting of Azerbaijan's national council — a 50-member body elected by parliament — has seen strong attacks on the administration. Members of the opposition Popular Front claim that President Muzalibov's failure to develop a national army with properly trained men and a unified general staff has led to unnecessary casualties.

In a square in Baku, the capital, demonstrators accused the president, formerly the Communist ruler of the former Soviet republic, of being in the pay of the Armenians and a dupe of Moscow. But the strongest Azerbaijani criticism is directed against international proposals for a United Nations peacekeeping force in the enclave, which lies in Armenia. Opposition deputies say President Muzalibov has already accepted this proposal.

For their part, government representatives deny they have accepted the peacekeeping plan, but a foreign ministry official said that Azerbaijan would be willing to accept UN observers and experts as long as they came through Baku and with the permission of the authorities there. Both sides resent the notion of outside interference.

● Nicosia: The Iranian government said yesterday that it wanted the fighting between Armenia and Azerbaijan ended because the conflict could encourage big power intervention on its borders. A statement pledged that Iran would do all it could to restore peace in the area before "dominationist powers" intervened.



Noble gesture: President Yeltsin greeting Prince Vladimir Kirilovich Romanov, heir to the tsarist throne, in Paris at the residence of the Russian ambassador. A high point of Mr Yeltsin's state visit to France was the reception he hosted for descendants of the aristocrats who fled to France after the 1917 bolshevik revolution

(Philip Jacobson writes). Mr Yeltsin apologised for the manner in which their families were treated by communism and said those who fled were Russia's "moral and intellectual elite". The Russian parliament would study the possibility of granting dual citizenship to the descendants of exiles. Yesterday, on the eve of his re-

turn to Moscow, Mr Yeltsin paid handsome tribute to Mikhail Gorbachev, expressing warm appreciation of his "honourable" behaviour since he was forced from power. Earlier, President Mitterrand and Mr Yeltsin signed a treaty, while aides finalised agreements on French economic and technical assistance to Russia.

Babic seeks referendum on UN forces in Krajina

FROM TIM JUDAH IN BELGRADE

MILAN Babic, leader of Croatia's rebel Serb enclave of Krajina, proposed yesterday that a referendum be held on the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping force in the self-proclaimed republic.

His proposal came as Krajina was plunged into political turmoil, with the heads of many local authorities accepting the peacekeeping plan brokered by Cyrus Vance, the UN special envoy, but with Mr Babic and his colleagues still opposing it. Milan Babic, one of his close aides, said: "We want changes first, then we'll accept it."

On Thursday, President Tudjman of Croatia sent a letter to Boutros Boutros Ghali, the UN secretary-general, unconditionally accepting the plan, which could lead to the deployment of a 10,000-strong peacekeeping force in the Serb-ruled territories of Croatia. According to Mr Vance, this has left Mr Babic and his government as the last obstacle. The UN Security Council was voting yesterday on a resolution declaring that no peacekeeping force would be sent without the agreement of Mr Babic's government.

The Krajina problem is expected to come to a head on Monday when its parliament gathers to discuss the UN plan and Mr Babic's referendum proposal. He said that, considering his government's bitter opposition to the existing UN plan, it would now be absurd for it to accept it without consulting the people.

Last Monday, after a grueling 40-hour session involving Krajina leaders and representatives of the old Yugoslav federal presidency and the Serbian government, Mr Babic complained that he



and his colleagues had been subjected to "police methods and political torture" in an attempt to get them to accept the UN plan. Desperate to disengage from the Croatian war, Serbia has accepted the Vance plan but has so far failed to secure the agreement of the people it most directly concerns.

Under the terms of the plan, Krajina is to be demilitarised. The Yugoslav federal army withdrew, and UN troops are to be stationed throughout the mainly Serb-held territories of Croatia. Mr Babic has insisted that his men should not unilaterally disarm and that UN troops should be placed along the front line. On Sunday night Mile Paspalj, the leader of the Krajina assembly, made a sudden about-turn and agreed to the plan. The Krajina government then issued a statement saying he had no authority to do so.

Asked yesterday what he would do if the people of Krajina opted for the plan, Mr Babic said: "I shall follow the decision of the parliament and people." But he added: "I

cannot function against my own convictions."

Danko Peric, the editor of Knin radio, said that, at a meeting of 17 local authority heads in Knin, the Krajina capital, yesterday, only Knin itself was still opposed to the plan. "They will accept it on Monday," he said.

The local authority heads accompanied Mr Babic to the Belgrade talks last week. According to him, they were frequently taken aside and subjected to individual pressure to accept the UN plan. Yesterday he said: "After the referendum the pressure will diminish and nobody will say that it is personal politics anymore."

● Titograd: Momir Bulatovic, president of the mountainous republic of Montenegro, says he wants to build a new Yugoslavia with his Serbian allies but will resign if his countrymen opt for independence. "We are interested in being with Serbia in one country and we think the interest of the people of Montenegro is to continue living in a common state," he said. (Reuters)

Threat of strikes intensifies

FROM PATRICK MOSER IN BONN

THE threat of strikes, which the Bonn government claims would further accelerate the economic slowdown, loomed over Germany yesterday as union leaders said 430,000 bank employees might walk out if employers did not agree to resume pay negotiations by Wednesday.

Union leaders said they had enough support for industrial action and that almost 79 per cent of the 9,000 bank employees who took part in a first wave of voting were in favour of a strike. The strike ballot was held after negotiations broke down last month, with unions insisting on a 10.5 per cent pay increase and employers offering 5 per cent.

Government officials and economists have insisted that wage agreements should remain well below 6 per cent to avoid aggravating the current economic downturn and sparking a price spiral.

● Budapest: Helmut Kohl, the German chancellor, served notice yesterday that Bonn could no longer carry the full burden of supplying aid to east Europe and the former Soviet Union, and he criticised other countries for not showing enough solidarity with the emerging democracies. It was his second strong comment this week about a possible slowdown in German assistance.

Kaunda lives on family support

Kenneth Kaunda, the former Zambian president, is broke, according to the *Zambia Daily Mail*. It said that Dr Kaunda, aged 67, is living in a rented home paid for by one of his sons. He told the newspaper that the government of President Chiluba had not paid him any retirement benefits and he described himself as "financially very unstable".

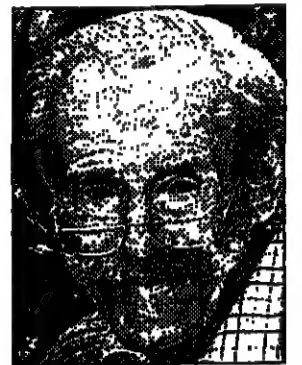
Mikhail Gorbachev, the former Soviet president, intends to visit Japan in April to seek help for the Moscow-based research group which he has run since leaving office in December.

The 1992 United Nations population prize has been awarded to Janshedil Tata, aged 87, the Indian industrialist and family planning pioneer. The award was established in 1981 for achievements in the field of world population. Mr Tata, aged 87, is to receive \$12,500 (£6,900).

In an interview with the French TF1 television channel, Salman Rushdie, the Indian-born British author who wrote *The Satanic Verses*, has spoken of his loss of freedom since Iranian death threats forced him into hiding three years ago. He said that there was a need for a "lay form of Islam" to counter Muslim fundamentalism and the rise of Islamic regimes. The author said that he had lost three years in the life of his son and the freedom to return to India, which inspires much of his work.

A jazz-blues festival boasting international stars such as Ray Charles, Roberta Flack, B.B. King and Nina Simone is to be held in Blackpool in July. It is being organised by Ronnie Scott.

The Prince of Wales is slimming down his Duchy of Cornwall business by putting a sawmill at Downend, near Loswihel, up for sale. No reason has been given, but the mill, which employs about 25 people, is reputed to be on offer for about £1 million. A spokeswoman for the estate said that the prince was trying to safeguard the jobs of the employees.



Jack Mann, above, the former British hostage in Lebanon, returned to his home in Nicosia yesterday after nearly a month in hospital where he was treated for pneumonia. Looking frail, but in obvious high spirits, Mr Mann, aged 77, said that he was "looking forward to getting back to my own place".

● Ronald Reagan, the former American president, celebrated his 81st birthday with a surprise party at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, Los Angeles. About 150 people, many of them schoolchildren, were in the library when Mr Reagan walked through the lobby to a cake bearing an American flag and the words "Happy Birthday Mr President".

Aids-like epidemic ravages dolphins

FROM CHRIS ELIOU IN ATHENS

SWIMMERS at Anavissos, near Athens, were distressed to witness a pair of dolphins apparently committing suicide. They saw one thrashing in its death throes on the beach. Soon after its mate began dashing its head against jagged rocks, until it died.

A few days after the incident, in early December, the phenomenon was repeated in other parts of Greece. Environmental researchers have since established that an Aids-like virus is responsible for the deaths of more than 300 marine mammals, including small whales.

The researchers now fear that the deadly virus, which strikes the immune

system in the same way that the HIV virus attacks people, might be spreading to other sea creatures.

Kathy Siakavara, an official of the Athens branch of Greenpeace, said that post-mortem examinations had shown extensive damage to brain tissue. Other tests revealed severe liver damage, apparently caused by the virus and toxic wastes in the heavily polluted eastern end of the Mediterranean.

She said that nothing was definite yet. But there were strong indications to believe that the virus was of the measles type, and samples of it had been sent to The Netherlands for tests.

Maastricht 'monster' is signed into being

Despite the intricate treaty compromises reached in December backstage bickering continues, George Brock writes from Maastricht

represented by Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, and Francis Maude, the Euro-sceptical financial secretary to the Treasury. Norman Lamont, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who does not enjoy EC gatherings, must have been relieved to be otherwise engaged.

The agreement on European monetary union commits an unknown number of countries to start using a single currency by the beginning of 1999 at the latest. Membership of the select group will be decided by which economies meet strict tests: at the moment only three countries do so. The German Bundesbank yesterday made clear its disapproval of the timetable which Helmut Kohl, the chancellor, agreed at

Maastricht: it said that economic convergence should not be "restricted by a timeframe".

The document signed yesterday does not, however, make any concessions to second thoughts. No significant changes were written in while the 300-page text was "cleaned", translated into nine languages and a few outstanding squabbles sorted out. Herr Kohl sent a *frisson* down the spine of the French establishment when he remarked that whatever Europe's single currency was called in the late 1990s, it would not be called the *ecu*. He said the name was frightful. German diplomats at tempted to change *ecu* to *ECU*, standing for the less romantic European currency

unit. The French insisted on *ecu* (the name of one of their own 13th-century gold coins) symbolising future French leverage over the Bundesbank. A fudge was inevitable: different language versions of the treaty now vary the word: English and German have *ECU*, while the French and Dutch have *ecu*.

The intricate compromises reached at Maastricht in December let all the community leaders go home with something to be happy about. The town of Maastricht gives its name to the most ambitious revision of the Treaty of Rome ever attempted, but the treaty, which includes 17 protocols and 33 declarations, is also the most flexible and unpredictable constitution that the 12 countries have ever agreed.

Doubts about the ability of the Maastricht document to survive unaltered until the scheduled review date in 1996 have surfaced quickly. Can these provisions possibly cope with the expansion

of the Community to include both Scandinavian and east European members? Social Democrats in the German Bundestag have threatened to block ratification of the treaty — which the 12 national parliaments are supposed to have achieved by the end of the year — unless the European parliament is given greater powers than those already assigned.

Federalists are especially disgruntled. They are fed up with Rudi Lubbers, the Dutch prime minister, for allowing John Major to stay out of the Social Chapter. They have also been firing poisoned arrows at Pierre de Boisfeu, France's chief negotiator at the treaty talks, who dreamt up the "three-pillared" structure that keeps future co-operation on foreign, defence and legal policy outside the EC machinery. The treaty is, according to one jaundiced Italian commentator writing yesterday, a "legal and political monster".

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Clifford Longley

Annulment is badly handled within the Catholic Church

The King's Matter was not really about divorce but about annulment. Henry VIII did not say that he should not have married Katherine, but that he had not married her, whatever the legal formalities said to the contrary. So the marriage never existed at all, and Anne of Cleves, not Katherine of Aragon, was truly his first wife. If he had not then scythed his way through a veritable harem, history might even have believed he meant it.

It is difficult to make sense of the logic of his "divorce" without adopting a metaphysical view of a marriage as something that exists as an independent entity — or did not exist, according to Henry's petition against Katherine. The medievalists thought there was a real but invisible bond between husband and wife, something with an objective reality apart from what they felt about it or even what the law said about it. Whether Henry was married to Katherine was a fact, like a scientific fact, waiting to be discovered: and one cannot make a scientific fact untrue simply by denying it or passing a law to say so. A decree of annulment is not supposed to make a marriage null, but to describe what is already the case.

This remains the theory of marriage used in the Roman Catholic Church, where annulment cases are being heard at the rate of something like two thousand a year in England and Wales. The church does not recognise divorce (nor does English law recognise Roman Catholic annulments), yet curiously, the church tribunals refuse to entertain a case until a civil divorce has been obtained in the English courts. But the level of satisfaction among those who resort to this remedy for marriage breakdown may be no better than Henry's. It is a system needing reform.

Recently *The Tablet* publicised the grievances of one dissatisfied customer of the English Roman Catholic marriage tribunals, and this has drawn letters from others. It has also published a response from a canon lawyer who practises in the tribunals. Clearly the intention of the lawyers is sympathetic and compassionate. None the less their effect is secretive and frustrating. Above all, the tribunals have little time for the principle that justice must be seen to be done. The consistent complaint seems to be that people are offered neither information nor explanation as their case goes through the works. At the end they are bewildered and alienated, hardly able to tell whether they have had justice or not.

A highly detrimental comparison can be made with secular courts, where lawyers are expected to keep clients in the picture and to act only on instructions. In church annulments the canon lawyers have taken over the initiative completely, or so the client is wont to feel. And the lawyers are all priests, so the deference due to an expert is compounded by the deference due to the priesthood. But deference is no bar to resentment.

The flaws in the church annulment process are nowadays of this kind rather than the more infamous abuses of the past, when annulments seemed to go mostly to the rich, titled and privileged. Today's tribunals make no charge to those who cannot pay. Only the few cases which have to be referred to Rome are subject to long delay. And the theory behind annulment has acquired a respectable basis in the contemporary psychiatric understanding of marriage, such as the research of Dr Jack Dominian into marriage breakdown.

The psychodynamics of a "valid" marriage turn out to be so different from those of an "invalid" one that the tribunals now routinely accept psychiatric reports as evidence. Above all, the tribunals have recognised that the capacity to make a lifelong commitment demands a degree of maturity not every person possesses. So some "marriages" which fall never stood a chance: were never, so to speak, marriages at all. The tribunals, if satisfied that this is the case, will declare such a marriage a nullity. There are lessons of wider application here.

But the canon lawyers must look to their procedures if they want to regain the confidence of the people they serve. English Catholics will not happily accept a lower quality of justice from their own church courts than they are used to in the civil courts. Indeed church courts should be striving to do even better.

Roman Catholics make up 10 per cent of the population, and so probably near 10 per cent of the total 150,000 divorces a year. With only two thousand annulments a year being considered, it is clear that many ignore the church's tribunals. Nor do those who attend tribunals sound content. That is hardly a vote of confidence.

As Maigret returns to the screen, H.R.F. Keating explores what makes a detective great

A sleuth in a million



Rupert Davies: the 1960s Maigret

fancy to the high reaches of imagination. Poe saw his detective as one capable of throwing himself into the spirit of an opponent. "Identifying himself therewith."

The great characteristic of Maigret as a detective is not the employment of scientific method or of the two-fisted approach of the American private eye. It is his ability to puzzle away at the outward features of a murder until he can understand the essence of the murderer. The things that puzzle him are not how the poison got into the teacup or how the weapon was spirited out of the hermetically sealed chamber. He is puzzled by nothing less than the souls of human beings.

Simenon's stories have few of the ingredients generally thought of as making for a huge popularity. There is not much action or clever investigation. Most of the time Maigret simply mopes. But his moping is the Great Detective at work, and

this, though they may not realise it, is what appeals to readers. It also lay behind the huge success of Sherlock Holmes, a success that spawned all those copycat detectives. But the authors of all but a few of those books failed to see what Edgar Allan Poe had discovered. They thought that the mere solution of an ingeniously concealed murder was what attracted the reader. It was not. It was the hint of an answer to a much greater mystery: the mystery of what other people are that made them read and read.

Maigret bears all the hallmarks of the Great Detective even down to the characteristic way of arriving at the solution to an apparently insoluble mystery in a trance, in which the rational and the intuitive are combined

in a fusing flash of the imagination. Sherlock Holmes is notorious for the trance hours spent in a miasma of tobacco smoke before pronouncing judgment.

Maigret, too, is a formidable pipe-smoker, but he has other forms of trance as well. On one occasion, in "The Crime in the Rue Saint-Catherine" he solves his mystery by means of a ferocious head-cold. In bed, smothered under "a mass of sheets and blankets", the air pungent with the aroma of eucalyptus, he lies for hours, emerging at last with the answer.

Maigret, too, came to know what a truly weighty figure he was, though he seldom allowed the knowledge to appear, certainly not to his fellow flics. In *Maigret's First Case*, (not, of

course, the first Maigret novel) he thinks that what he would really like to have been was "a repairer of destinies", a sort of doctor for souls. And in *Maigret and the Headless Corpse*, he claims his ideal vocation, about which he had never told anyone, would be to become "a guide to the lost".

How did the young small-time Belgian journalist Georges Simenon, making a living of sorts in Paris by scribbling out 80 pages of fast fiction a day with some 300 stories to his credit under such names as Jean du Perry, Christian Brulls and Georges Sim, come to make his new hero a Great Detective? Did he know at all what he was doing? The answer, I think, must be that he did not consciously make Maigret a pattern Great Detective. If he had attempted that, he would in all probability have produced a pastiche figure destined for a life no longer than a Valentine card.

But at the start it was Simenon's astonishing empathy for human beings of all sorts and conditions which enabled him to throw himself into the spirit of such Great Detectives as his chance reading — and he was a prodigious reader — had led him to. And we can be sure he had at some time made the acquaintance of the immensely popular Sherlock Holmes.

That empathy is the quality shared to the full by Maigret and his creator. Maigret is, indeed, the detective as writer, the man who wants to understand, in leading us through the pages of an absorbing story eventually to comprehend the often incomprehensible — murderers, the obsessed, the utterly weak — Simenon, through Maigret, enlarges our understanding of the other. He makes us know those people out there who seem to behave in ways altogether contrary to our own. This is what all the Great Detectives do. They attempt to solve the mystery of the human personality.

H.R.F. Keating is president of the Detection Club. *Maigret begins tomorrow, 8.45 pm on ITV*

When corruption reigned

Elections today look tame beside the violence of 18th-century campaigns, says Jonathan Clark

Paddy Ashdown's affair, Neil Kinnock's Russian contacts, — for want of ideological drama, 1992 is being hailed as the election of sleaze and smear. But is British politics really getting worse? Are we set on copying yet more fashions from America? Does it matter?

Modern Englishmen are given to prim disapproval at the sight of American democracy in action: the dominance of trivial local issues over important national ones, the swamping of idealism by self-interest, the razzmatazz, the horse trading, the enormous sums of money openly changing hands. Yet all these things mirror the practices of 18th-century England, the United States' parent culture.

In many ways, American practices have been revolutionised but not reformed. The trauma of revolution in 1776 from certain things at a point in their history, like the shadows of atom-bomb victims imprinted in an instant onto a wall in Hiroshima.

English political satire is held currently to reach heights of invective never before known; since *That Was The Week That Was* in the early 1960s, satirical television is supposed to have swayed governments. Yet within their technological limits, 18th-century publicists did just as well. Cartoonists made explicit allegations of financial gerrymandering and rammed home the lesson with savage and scatological imagery. The path to royal favour was shown to be, literally, by kissing Walpole's posterior.

In 1753 the repeal of the enlightened Jewish Naturalisation Act was forced by a blatant manipulation of anti-Semitism. When Lord Bute's rise to power at Leicester House and influ-

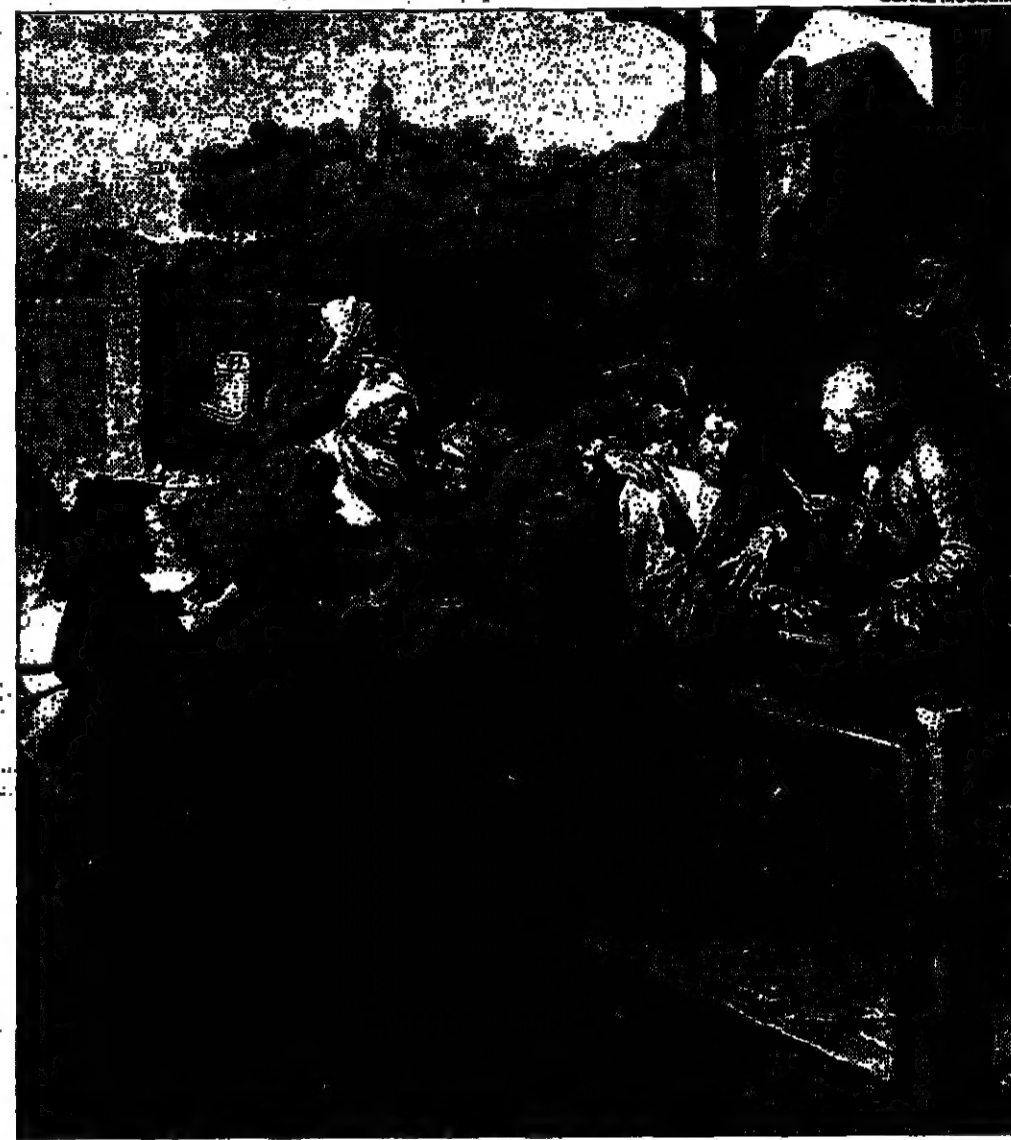
ence over the future George III was ascribed to an adulterous relationship, cartoonists showed Princess Augusta holding out a besom to receive Bute's highly stylised broomstick.

Hostile satire and subversive argument were intensely feared by governments desperately insecure in their titles to power. The bloody repression of the Jacobite press under the first two Georges was the most melodramatic example of this. In 1719 the ministry was ruthless enough to execute 18-year-old John Matthews for publishing the Jacobite pamphlet *Vox Populi Vox Dei*. So terrified was the Whig regime that in 1737 the Licensing Act subjected the stage for the first time to official censorship in advance of performance. Political survival, not public decency, was the goal.

Nor did matters quickly improve. In 1786 the future George IV's illegal marriage to Mrs Fitzherbert was publicised in a *Gillray* print which claimed to depict a bedroom scene on "The Morning after Marriage". In 1798, after the Irish rebellion, *Gillray* starkly accused the Whig leaders Fox, Sheridan, Erskine and Norfolk of lying, in testifying to the good character of the traitor Arthur O'Connor at his trial — testimony which secured his acquittal (though he later confessed his guilt).

Innuendoes and, finally, real information about certain politicians' and trade unionists' contacts with Moscow pale into insignificance beside the widespread involvement of early-18th-century Englishmen in Jacobite conspiracies aimed at armed revolution.

The Stuarts at St Germaine or Rome were better at keeping secrets than the KGB, but



A lunatic is taken to cast his vote in 1754, a detail from Hogarth's "The Polling"

rumours sometimes leaked out. William Pitt, later Earl of Chatham, was convinced that his Oxford contemporary William Murray (later Earl of Mansfield and father of English commercial law) had been implicated in treason, and in the 1750s Pitt's innuendo forced his rival out of the House of Commons; but he could not prove it.

The evidence was there in the Stuart archives nevertheless. In Paris during the summer vacation of his second year at Christ Church, Murray had written to the Old Pretender's secretary with a gift of money for the cause and a promise of allegiance: "The chief end I would propose from my studies and education, and the greatest glory I can aim at, is to be able to serve his Majesty [James III] in any way

that he pleases to command me." This letter ticked away beneath his career like a timebomb. He was not alone.

The hustings were still worse. Dr Johnson called the general election a "sabbatharian season". With electoral registers not introduced until 1832 and no secret ballot until 1872, the whole cycle of canvassing, entertaining, establishing tide and

polling the voters took place in public. Violence was commonplace.

Candidates in rough seas, if wise, were protected by hired gangs of thugs. They dominated the action of Hogarth's "Chaining the Members", one of a famous series immortalising the relatively issue-free but nonetheless lively general election of 1754. "The Polling" depicts a drooping lunatic being prompted to cast his vote, and a corpse supported by two minders also waiting its turn, while a war hero is refused, offering to swear on the Bible with a hook, not a hand. "The Election Dinner" leaves nothing to the imagination in its depiction of gluttony and corruption.

In the 18th century, petitions against corrupt returns were heard and decided by the Commons itself, voting on flagrantly partisan lines: Whig majorities would unseat Tory MPs on Whig petitions and vice versa. Political management became steadily more effective by 1800 the price of a borough seat, to an outsider, might be £5,000 (at a time when an artisan's annual income might be £50), and even the political classes felt the strain.

Yet this steadily increasing investment in seats and relish for satire meant also an increasing commitment to parliamentary government. Men would not have paid so much to buy their way into a House of Commons that was ineffective or irrelevant. As the historian Sir Lewis Namier pointed out, no man bribes where he can bully. Paradoxically, the corruption of a system can also be an index to the freedom of the society which sustains it.

Hanoverian Englishmen developed a wary affection for the electoral machinery, despite (or perhaps because of) its wars. Perhaps the appetite of today's public for a good smear or a juicy scandal is still the biggest barrier to parliamentary reform. If so, it may be cause for confidence.



...and moreover

PHILIP HOWARD

De pronunciationibus non disputandum. One should not argue about pronunciation. Everybody has a peculiar pronunciation, different from the pronunciations of everybody else in the world. That is how we recognise people by their voices, and why we can measure an individual's phonemes.

Pronunciation is affected by race, class, region, sex, shape of vocal chords and many other factors, including fashion. The last factor is important. In the 18th century in southern England, it became the fashion to pronounce words like *bath* and *path* with a broad *a* rather than a flat *a* as in *Mars*. The fashion crossed the Atlantic to Boston and other towns of New England, but did not penetrate further inland. The fashion caught on so firmly in Boston that according to H.L. Mencksen, upper-class Bostonians a century ago were giving the smart broad *a* pronunciation to such improbable words as *apple*, *hammer* and *Saturday*.

Fashion constantly stirs pronunciation, as it does other aspects of language. It has become the fashion to pronounce *niche*, the ornamental recess, in a Frenchified way as *neesh*. This is probably part of the modern tendency to pronounce foreign-looking words in a foreign-sounding way, to suggest that we are polyglot world travellers and cognoscenti.

Until very recently the word was pronounced *nitch*, rhyming with "itch". Here is Swift in *To a Lady*, 1726, indicating his

pronunciation by the rhyme: "If I can but fill my niche, / I attempt no higher pitch." This is how Charles Elton, the founder of modern ecology as an academic study, who died last year, pronounced the word, to which he gave a new meaning. He founded and directed the Bureau of Animal Population, which was one of the ornaments of Oxford biology. In his *Animal Ecology* of 1927 he wrote: "It is therefore convenient to have some term to describe the status of an animal in its community, to indicate what it is doing and not merely what it looks like, and the term used is 'niche'." Elton said it *nitch*, match.

The same old pronunciation is given in the *limerick*. There was a young lady of Chichester Who made even the saints in their niches sit. At events and Martin Her sike and her sikes Made the Bishop of Chichester's bristles sit.

When fashion (or ignorance) starts to change the pronunciation of a word, there is no point in crying foul. The etymology of *niche* is no help in establishing a "correct" pronunciation. It may come from the Latin *nicchio* to make a niche or nest, which would support the pronunciation *neesh*. Or it may come from *nicchio* a mussel-shell. Its cognates, German *nische*, Dutch *nis*, and Russian *nish*, support the old fashioned *nitch* pronunciation. But sometimes a new fashion in pronunciation works against

the etymology, so muddying the waters. It is becoming fashionable to pronounce *dissect* with a long *i* as *dyesset*. That careful scholar and good speaker William Waldegrave did it three times in rapid succession the other day. From this novel pronunciation, lovers of language should dyesset and dyesset themselves. *Dyesset* is confounded by false analogy with *blast*, and the new way of saying the word destroys the sundering sound of the *dis*-prefix. Similar shifts in pronunciation from fashion and ignorance are affecting hundreds of words, from *kilometre* and *decade* to *irrevocable*. It is an inevitable and irrevocable part of language. It seldom affects the price of vowels. But it can have queer consequences.

Ache as in *pain* is one of our more tiresome spellings. Until Shakespeare's time the noun was written and pronounced *alick*, and the verb *alze*. This is a common pattern of differentiating nouns from verbs, as in *speech/speak*, *stench/stink*, *stitch/stick*. In a rich niche of language, *ache* as both verb and noun adopted the spelling of the noun, but the pronunciation of the verb. Dr Johnson made things worse by erroneously deriving the noun and verb from the Greek "*achos*", with which they have no connection, and declaring "more grammatically written *ache*".

It does not make English spelling or pronunciation easier. But we were not sent into this world to have an easy time.

Carbed crusader

HOLY SMOKE! Labour's latest poster campaign, featuring stormin' Norman Lamont as the dreaded Vamman, has been zapped by Warner Brothers.

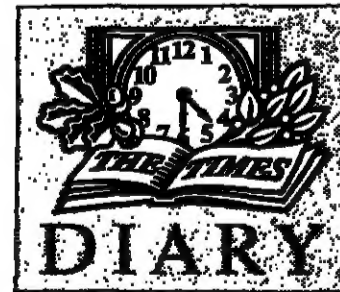
Power When Warners, which owns the world rights to the Batman image, saw the posters, it threatened Labour with legal action for alleged breach of copyright of the caped crusader.

Biff David Hill, Labour's boy wonder and communications director, realised he had met his match to avoid litigation. Labour agreed to make a £200 donation to charity.

Kerpow! The charity nominated is Mencap. The Joker's hand must have been in this one. Mencap just happens to be the favourite charity of John and Norma Major.

Kerr-anch! It may be purely coincidence, but the charity, presided over by chairman Lord Rix of Whitehall (who was made a life peer by Major only last month) is concerned. The prime minister's wife, who only last week attended a fundraising event at the charity, is chairman of Mencap's Huntingdon branch. Is the charity being used in a piece of cheap political propaganda?

Hasty consultations on the Batphone and the decision is taken. The money can be accepted: the charity was chosen not by Neil Kinnock but by Warners. "In effect, this money did not come from Labour but from Warner Brothers," says a relieved Mencap spokeswoman.



While the Queen's party at the royal gala performance of Don Giovanni at Covent Garden on Monday will not be spared the sight of the naked lady reclining on the Don's dinner table, one change has been made to save the royal blushes. As Thomas Allen sings "O Bello Piatto", licking his lips in anticipation of the unusual fare on his table, the translation "what a tasty dish" will not appear in the English surtitles. The opera house feared too much itching in the royal presence, it seems.

Turn up for the book

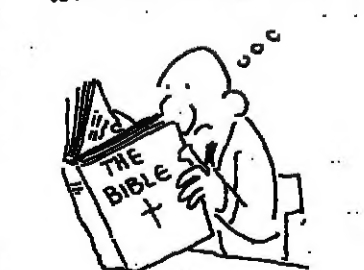
MARGARET FORSTER, who is currently working on a biography of Daphne du Maurier, has come across her most important find yet. She has just received from America a 40-page ruled account-book, in which the finely written pencil script begins: "They used to hang men at Four Turnings in the old days." It is the opening line of *My Cousin Rachel*, and the notebook contains the first chapter of du Maurier's novel. Further pages contain an outline for the rest of the plot and snatches of dialogue. "This is a much better find than the Rebecca notebook, which was published in 1981. You can see how the whole novel evolved," says Forster. "It was unearthed in Ant-

erica quite by chance and American universities would be drooling over it. In Britain it is the done thing to sneer at du Maurier. People think because she was a bestseller she can't be any good."

Late converts

THEY may have had a starring role in the Book of Acts, but until now the Macedonians have been unable to read the Good Book in their own language. Now, in one of the more unusual consequences of the break-up of Yugoslavia, the Bible is to be translated into Macedonian — the 1,978th language in which the book will be available.

In the beginning was the CLOBOTO...



available. Rade Siljan, director of the Macedonian Book Publishing House, says the new translation is "a great new beginning for the Macedonian language and culture". Shame that the Macedonians' main biblical claim to fame is that they threw Paul and Silas into prison.

Turfed out

THE Westminster Wobblers is not a football team to set Pavlovian singing. It consists of MPs and their staff, who regard losing snail as a good result. The Wobblers

were delighted, then, when Manchester United agreed to allow them to stage a charity game before the kick-off in the first division fixture against Crystal Palace on February 22.

Many footballers dream of playing at Old Trafford, so not surprisingly, team captain and Tory MP Alistair Burt for once had a full squad to choose from. Indeed with an election looming, so many MPs fancied pulling on their boots in front of a huge crowd that Burt could have put out two teams.

Unfortunately, Alex Ferguson, the Manchester United manager, has objected. There was no way a team of clodhopping MPs was going to mess up the precious turf before a crucial game. A compromise has been reached, and the match will now go ahead after the league fixture, meaning that the MPs will play to almost empty terraces. A few of the Wobblers are now threatening to cry off with sprains and strains, but Burt's enthusiasm is undimmed and he has drafted into the MP's side the most famous name he could think of — not John Major but Bobby Charlton.

"It will be a huge thrill just to walk out on to the Old Trafford turf," says Burt. "To score a goal there would make my dreams come true" — not to mention probably netting a few votes down the road in Bury, where Burt defends a majority of less than 3,000.

Michael Heseltine made a timely announcement on Thursday, telling the press that the beloved towers of Marsham Street, which house the environment and transport departments, are to be demolished. Only last week workmen finished installing new lavatories and redecorating the stairwells and doors on all 19 floors. Yes, Minister could not have scripted things better.



SEX APPEAL

Should the law protect public figures such as Paddy Ashdown from the publication of unsavoury stories about them? The answer is no. Should the law censor tasteless or pornographic material in newspapers or television? No. Should the law ban political bias or unfair reporting, blasphemy or the offending of minorities? Again, no.

Laws have been attempted abroad on all these matters. They do not work. Both the Younger and the Calcutt committees opposed privacy laws to control the media. They did so not out of any respect for the dignity of the press or freedom of speech, but because they felt privacy laws were impracticable and unenforceable. They said so although presented with a mountain of self-righteousness and hypocrisy: of gross intrusion justified as press freedom, of pornography described as "integral to the telling of the story", of salaciousness parading as "fearless court reporting".

Those outside the press need not sneer. Sexuality remains the most potent of all sales techniques. Advertisers use it. Publishers who put out over the *Mirror* and *Sun* tell their authors to put in more "good bits" and select lascivious covers to sell their books. Film makers insert and then publicise gratuitous sex and violence to help promotion. A clearly desperate Leeds ballet company is promoting a sexually explicit Swan Lake. The BBC recently conjured a ludicrous nude scene into *A Time to Dance* to generate "event publicity". As journalists cloak their voyeurism in "press freedom", so others cloak theirs in "artistic freedom", in "exploring the nature of modern sexuality". Both know their real cloak is a dirty machintosh.

Sex is the most intimate form of human behaviour and thus the one most open to voyeuristic exploitation. Many people deeply resent the sense of intrusion when forced into such voyeurism against their will. The response of the authoritarian liberal is simply to say: tough on them. Just as public figures can choose not to enter the heat of the kitchen, so the private person can throw away the newspaper, reject the book or turn off the television. Freedom of speech is the freedom to cause offence. Such intolerance in the name of tolerance is usually highly partial: it excuses sexual and verbal obscenity but not religious or racial offence.

The right to shock at will is not one that society has ever recognised, if only in the interests of public order. Again this, artists, writers and journalists have felt some obligation to push out the boundaries of awareness, of investigation, of experience. They seek to reveal man's inhumanity to man just as they wish to alert society to its own glories and failures. Shock is one such technique. Yet this licence, to shock, like the converse right to privacy, cannot be defined at law. It must depend on those who claim it being ready to exercise it with discretion.

In the past month, most news organisations have genuinely agonised over how to handle an extraordinary series of news stories. From the Anita Hills, Kennedy Smith and Bill Clinton sagas in America to those of Robert Maxwell and Paddy Ashdown in Britain, newspapers have had to judge, within the laws of libel and contempt,

how much their readers really want to know, and how far the boundaries of privacy and public taste should be pushed.

Newspapers are "bad taste" institutions as they are bad news ones. But they still withhold material daily on grounds of taste: intrusive or horrific photographs, explicit court cases, intrusive references to individuals. Newspapers sometimes err, as *The Times* did recently in its presentation of a distressing story from Japan. When selection is made on the spur of the moment and in the heat of the market place, it can go awry.

The Ashdown case has already led the chairman of the Press Complaints Commission to give newspapers a warning on invasion of privacy. He might have added an informal one to broadcasters, who this week rivalled the tabloids in hyping every detail of the Ashdown liaison. *The Times* takes no particular pride in covering a story that it would not have covered had other newspapers not goaded Mr Ashdown and his former girlfriend into public statements. Consistency might have required a blanket self-censorship. But from Monday the news was patently in the public arena and readers would have found total silence extraordinary.

Politicians are reportedly spoiling for confrontation when the Press Complaints Commission's remit comes up for review later this year. Self-regulation is once again at risk. Following the report of the Calcutt committee in 1990, the press accepted a code of conduct on privacy. This code was voluntary and was intended to avoid spurious ex post facto justifications of the sort much heard in the Ashdown case. While Mr Ashdown might have been seen as fair game, the same could not possibly apply to Patricia Howard (let alone to her predecessor as Mr Ashdown's secretary, who was pursued on her honeymoon). The code of conduct was useless in her defence. Only the most tendentious apologist could claim that last week saw the press in fearless pursuit of an event of great political importance. The media may as well come clean: it was after a salacious scandal and did not mind who got hurt.

The argument against legal restraint of these matters must be restated, albeit now with a note of desperation. The basis of any law against vicarious intrusion is that, while it may be offensive, hurtful and tasteless, it is impracticable to seek to make it a definable tort. A statutory enforcement of the code of conduct, as mooted by Calcutt, is vulnerable to the same weakness: the terms of the code would have the force of law, requiring precise definition. Intrusion into privacy is ultimately a matter of taste. Matters of taste make bad law, witness those on blasphemy.

But there soon may come a time when *overchez la femme* goes one fornication too far, when the nation replies to media excesses with a loud sarcastic laugh. Then the nation's elected representatives may turn the nation's laughter to anger and anger to action. Legislation, censorship and control would follow. Such laws would have to extend beyond the press to broadcasting and the arts and even contemporary history. They would be clumsy and unfree. The only way of averting them is self-restraint on the part of all concerned.

WEIMAR RUSSIA

"I can already feel the breath on our necks of those who wear the black and the brown shirts," Boris Yeltsin said in Paris. The spectre of Weimar is haunting Russia. Civil order is breaking down. Inflation races inexorably ahead. Crime is rising and the black market dominates daily life. Antisemitism is on the rise and anyone making money is denounced as a criminal and exploiter of poverty. Parliamentarians impotently argue out their frustrations, ministers bicker among themselves, and the communist old guard, bitter at being "stabbed in the back" — the *Dolchostoss* of Nazi mythology — foments unrest and plans its revenge. All the ingredients for a fascist coup are in place.

President Yeltsin would be his first victim. His government would be swept away, the hated price rises cancelled, the freedom of the press and newly won democratic rights suspended, liberals arrested and the entire reform process of the past six years thrown hard into reverse. It is the worst scenario that Nato and the West can imagine. That is why President Yeltsin speaks out so often and in such apocalyptic terms. He is attempting the same blackmail as President Gorbachev: unless the West comes to his aid immediately and massively, he will be overthrown by the forces of darkness.

He is exaggerating. A military coup still looks unlikely. Fascism is not an organised political force in Russia. President Yeltsin still retains broad support and popularity. But his warnings must be taken seriously. A dangerous coalition of the disaffected is waiting for a strong leader with a unifying ideology. Even the liberal intelligentsia is being swayed by the appeal of Russian nationalism.

The biggest danger is that Mr Yeltsin rules in a political vacuum. Reformers in Russia have never managed to create a political vehicle, like Solidarity in Poland, for their reforms. The movement known as Democratic Russia was an attempt, before the abortive August coup, to set up a cohesive opposition to the communists. Even experienced liberals such as Eduard Shevardnadze, the former foreign minister, realised that it would not work. After 70 years of totalitarianism, Russians have a rudimentary understanding of multi-party democracy but no culture of political compromise to enable a government to tackle the challenges facing it.

Mr Yeltsin has no way of enforcing his reforms. The proscription of the communist party was tantamount to abolishing the entire civil service. Local administrators have

been left floundering. The ensuing chaos is compounded by separatist forces not only in the republics, now independent countries, but in autonomous regions in the sprawling Russian Federation. Some Muslim areas, such as Chechnya-Ingushetia and Tataria, have already "declared" their independence. Others in the Far East are turning their backs on Moscow and trying to set up regional fiefdoms.

All agree that only tangible evidence of economic progress — or at least a halt in the downward spiral — will give Mr Yeltsin a chance of security. Mr Gorbachev failed because he did not say how long change would take. Nor did he have the nerve to begin the scale of economic reform that would have delivered the goods. His failure has made more formidable his successor's task, as Russians are now deeply cynical about the market economy. They insist, wrongly, that there was more food in Leningrad during the wartime siege than in St Petersburg today. Such false but widespread belief is corrosive to democracy.

Only the West can apparently bring hope to the Russians. But aid of food will not bring plenty to the shops. In the long run such aid is destabilising, ruining local initiative, upsetting emerging markets and breeding dependency and resentment. But it does show that the world cares. In the longer term, Russia needs new factories in green fields, operated efficiently by Russians under Western management and turning out products that are not controlled by the nebulous mafia or reserved for the privileged. Massive Western investment in the country is not commercially attractive. Without it, however, no amount of know-how will stave off riots in the big cities. Western governments must support investors with export guarantees, and in perhaps 30 years they will yield a return. Unlike Africa, Russia has abundant riches and an educated population. It was once a hugely productive industrial state. Yesterday's agreement in Paris on an extra \$650 million in credits is welcome, but nothing like enough.

Emergency blood must be pumped into Russia's arteries within the next two or three months. Only organisations such as the International Monetary Fund can do so on the scale required. Britain has rightly been arguing this to its partners for weeks. Yet even now the rest of the West seems unconvinced of the need. The world knows well what came after Weimar. Mr Yeltsin may be unscrupulous in drawing such parallels. But he is not crying wolf. That animal is already at the door.

Press coverage of Ashdown affair

From Mr Timothy Atkinson

Sir, The probable fact that a majority of electors do not consider adultery a relevant factor in deciding how to vote does not mean that there are not others who, quite properly, take a different view. A newspaper is probably entitled, perhaps even under a duty, to put information which it believes to justify an allegation against an elected figure before the public, to make what they will of it.

It is not, however, the reporting of such revelations in themselves which is of concern to society. What matters is the manner in which the media choose to report such revelations: the risk of hounding a politician from public office simply by virtue of injurious coverage in the sensationalist press cannot be justified.

Newspaper editors should consider the need for amending their code of conduct, so as to encourage properly restrained and responsible reporting of a politician's sexual misdemeanour, and thus to allow voters to decide for themselves its impact on their attitude to the politician in question.

Yours faithfully,
TIMOTHY ATKINSON,
1 Brick Court, Temple, EC4,
February 6.

From Mr K. R. Rollinson

Sir, Your third leader today denigrates Fleet Street's justification of publicity as weasel words. Not so.

Past performance is a factor in assessing future performance. If a candidate (for a job or political post) conceals his past, how can the employer or voter make a proper assessment? With full disclosure, the voter can then decide what he considers relevant. No one should do this for him.

The press are the ultimate ferrets to discover and disclose concealed information. Nothing must suppress this essential (the fourth) freedom. If what is disclosed is not true, then the law of libel is available.

Yours faithfully,
K. R. ROLLINSON,
Orchard House, Abington,
Cirencester, Gloucestershire,
February 6.

From Mrs E. E. Armstrong-James

Sir, I have never voted for Mr Ashdown's party but I am tempted to do so now. We should be asking our candidates how they would administer the country — not how they spend their leisure time.

Yours faithfully,
ENID E. ARMSTRONG-JAMES,
Bridge Cottage, The Street,
Woodton, Bungay, Suffolk.

From Mr George Thomas

Sir, If Paddy Ashdown's private life is at variance with his crafted public image then the public have a right to know and make of it what they will. He has no grounds for complaint. The woman involved, however, has committed no crime and is not in public life. By what right did the press so threaten her that she felt obliged to appear before them for public flagellation?

The Times also felt that her face and name should be known to us all. How tactful of you to put the photograph on page 2, but why did you publish it at all?

Yours faithfully,
GEORGE THOMAS,
17 Campden Hill Square, W8,
February 7.

From Mr R. E. Engel

Sir, It is ironic that Mr Robin Cook was making political capital out of a leaked NHS document (report, February 6) at almost the same time that Mr Ashdown was undergoing his ordeal. I do not accept that there is a difference between publishing confidential information stolen from a solicitor's office or from the files of a ministry.

Yours faithfully,
R. E. ENGEL,
The Old Posting House,
Welford Road,
Chapel Brampton, Northampton,
February 6.

NHS pay and funding

From Mr James Johnson

Sir, I was interested to read your speculative report (January 29) on performance-related pay for hospital doctors. Clinical excellence should, clearly be rewarded and this is what the merit award system attempts to do. Managers, however, would seek to give performance-related pay for meeting managerial targets and this is not always the same as clinical excellence.

For example, there may be a managerial target to admit patients with varicose veins who have been on the waiting list for a long time. This in turn might mean a few weeks' delay for cancer patients who have not been on the waiting list for long. The clinically correct decision might be to deal with the cancer patient, for whom a delay of even a few weeks might mean the difference between life and death, but the doctor who chose to treat the non-urgent case would be rewarded by extra pay.

Moreover, I find it scarcely credible that the government would aim to reward junior doctors for working

Letters to the editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (071) 782 5046.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Avoidance of any professional foul

From Mr Brian Grainger

Sir, This society has recently updated its application to the Privy Council for a royal charter, having felt for some time that the "closed shops" to which you refer (leading article, February 3) are not in the interests of the consumer. A second chartered body in the property profession would be of considerable assistance to our members' clients in Europe and elsewhere.

Our confirmed policy does not restrict membership to graduate entry only. We are very keen to uphold standards, but nevertheless take the view that the GCSE-level entry requirement is not only relevant for the late developer, but also provides opportunities for the early school-leaver to change direction in mid-career.

Yours faithfully,
BRIAN GRAINGER
(Professional services consultant),
The Incorporated Society of Valuers,
and Auctioneers,
3 Cadogan Gate, SW1.

From Mr D. J. Fermo

Sir, Not only is there, in my view, no "undesirable protection of professional privilege" for engineers of the sort which you indicate for the other professions, there is even a distinct class feeling that bright young men or women should turn their talents to those other professions.

The best young brains are encouraged to go into medicine, law, the Services, accounting, the City and architecture. Not so in Germany, America, Japan, Sweden, Finland — countries of which I have

recent personal experience. The social status of an engineer in those countries is every bit as high as that of the doctor or barrister.

Yours sincerely,
D. J. FERMO,
Medlar Cottage, Houghton Road,
Stockbridge, Hampshire,
February 3.

From Mr J. R. Wilkins

Sir, Your leading article extols competition as a spur to efficiency. It might be of interest to you to know that there are no longer fee scales among chartered building surveyors for professional work. Most work is obtained as a result of competitive fee tendering and, at present, this is exceedingly competitive (leading some in the profession to question whether this is best in the long-term interests of the client).

The costs of professional indemnity insurance, even for the smallest of firms, are soaring.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN WILKINS
(Chartered surveyor),
140 High Street, Tenterden, Kent.

From Mrs Pamela L. Littman

Sir, My husband, who is a chartered accountant, and I, who am a solicitor, have frequent disagreements with regard to his status, I maintaining that accountants are not a professional class.

Yours truly,
PAMELA L. LITTMAN,
16 Stanhope Gardens,
Mill Hill, NW7,
February 4.

Challenges on VAT and tax relief

From the Director of the Conservative Political Centre

Sir, Mr Giles Radice, MP (letter, February 3), cites the Conservative research department's *Campaign Guide 1991* (which I edited) in an attempt to support his assertion that an increase in the rate of value-added tax remains an objective of the Conservative party. Other Labour spokesmen have made similar claims.

The passage in the guide (p.44), which Mr Radice quotes on the switch to "some extent", from taxes on earnings to taxes on spending, follows word for word a commitment given in the 1979 Conservative manifesto and forms part of a list of the party's "key goals" in reforming taxation.

The guide goes on to list the steps that have been taken to achieve those goals. In other words it simply describes what has happened: it says nothing about future policy.

What then would Labour do about the shift to indirect taxes since 1979? If, in its judgment, the existing rate of VAT is too high, clear statements are needed about the extent to which it should be cut and the amount by which income tax would have to be increased accordingly.

Yours faithfully,
ALISTAIR B. COOKE,
Director,
Conservative Political Centre,
32 Smith Square,
Westminster, SW1,
February 3.

From Lord Joseph, CH

Sir, In expanding child care, and from the children's point of view, as urged by Fran Bennett and her co-

signatories (letter, February 1), government would be wise to:

1. Allow families, where the mother stays at home with the children, tax relief as if she were earning.
2. Recognise that children can be inadvertently harmed by impersonal and constantly changing child-care.
3. Help voluntary bodies such as the Pre-School Play Group Association and child-care co-operatives through which mothers can share child-care.

Yours faithfully,
KEITH JOSEPH,
House of Lords.

From Mrs Doreen Goodman

Sir, It is clear that the introduction of tax relief for child-care expenses and the extension of tax relief on help from employers will not benefit the most needy children in society. But if we are to judge how well any Budget measures meet the needs of children should we not take into account their emotional needs for parental care?

Surely to suggest provision for low-cost child care, "whether or not the parent(s) go out to work", is to ignore the establishment of the psychological bond which is vital to the mental health of the individual and of society.

What we do need is an adequate allowance that will enable all mothers to provide loving care at home throughout the early stages of psychological development.

Yours faithfully,
D. GOODMAN,
72 Whittingham Road,
Mapperton, Nottingham.

Weekend Money letters, page 24

The ageing process

From Mr Martin Kay

Sir, Why do different elements of the European Community impose different age requirements upon applicants for jobs of similar professional status and experience? For example, the European court has specified 42 as the ceiling for administration/translation specialists, whereas the Commission insists on 35.

The sad thing is, as we count down to the qualifying date for unrestricted movement of people, that there continue to be imposed any age limits upon their employment prospects.

Yours faithfully,
MARTIN KAY,
8 Elm Grove, Swainswick, Avon.

longer hours when it has recently gone to such lengths to reduce their time on duty.

Yours faithfully,
JAMES N. JOHNSON
(Deputy Chairman, Central Consultants and Specialists Committee),
British Medical Association,
BMA House,
Tavistock Square, WC1.

From Mr Chris Spry

Sir, You ran a report (January 6) about the possible inter-relationship between private health insurance cover and the formula for NHS funding of district health authorities. There is certainly an interesting issue as to whether funding formulae should be simple or complex and the story was successful in highlighting that. However, in one crucially important respect the report was inaccurate. South West Thames Regional Health Authority has never examined the specific issue of private health insurance cover and has no intention of doing so.

Yours faithfully,
C. J. SPRY
(Regional General Manager),
South West Thames Regional Health Authority,
40 Eastbourne Terrace, W2,
February 4.

Monarchy under the microscope

From the Deputy President of the Family Welfare Association

Sir, Recent discussion of the role of the monarchy has paid scant attention to the unique and invaluable support which is given to organisations like ours. Her Majesty is our patron, as she is of many like organisations. Within the constraints of her timeable and commitments she has given unstintingly of her time and support, as have other members of the royal family.

Whether it be a royal preview or Princess Margaret with a cup of tea in one hand and a bun in the other, chatting easily in a Brixton back garden to mothers and children attending our day centre there, that support is irreplaceable.

Any suggestion that the role should be undertaken by some transient president, constructed from the decaying remains of a former politician (successful or otherwise), leaves me wholly unconvinced.

Yours faithfully,
PETER PURTON,
Deputy President,
Family Welfare Association,
501 Kingsland Road, E8,
February 6.

From Mr R. P. G. Neville

Sir, Almost without exception, our monarchs have been remarkable for their ordinariness. This is surely as it should be: they are indeed the mirror in which we can, and should, perceive ourselves.

We are a nation of ordinary people who are sometimes called upon to do extraordinary things, when we respond magnificently.

Yours faithfully,
R. P. G. NEVILLE,
2 St James Place East,
The Hoe, Plymouth, Devon.

From Lord Boyd-Carpenter

Sir, Your leading article today refers to Her Majesty's return in February 1952 as being from a holiday in Kenya. In fact Princess Elizabeth, as she then was, was in Kenya as the first stage of a Commonwealth tour, which was to include Australia, undertaken in place of her father, King George VI, whose failing health made such a tour impossible.

The princess was in Kenya on important duty. It is unfair to suggest that she would have gone on a lengthy and distant holiday at a time when her father's health was so precarious.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant.
BOYD-CARPENTER,
House of Lords,
February 6.

From Miss Lorna Billinghurst

Sir, The royal family certainly do not live "normal" lives — we don't let them.

Yours faithfully,
LORNA BILLINGHURST,
10 Park Terrace, Cambridge.

From Miss Lorna Billinghurst

Sir, The royal family certainly do not live "normal" lives — we don't let them.

Yours faithfully,
LORNA BILLINGHURST,
10 Park Terrace, Cambridge.

egles which will equip the capital to succeed in a fiercely competitive global environment.

Last July the CBI produced a model for just such a body, which could be implemented quickly, would avoid party political conflict and would be considerably more cost effective than many of the other options.

Unfortunately, while the politicians wrangle over London's future, it is the whole country which loses out by failing to eliminate the capital's weaknesses and, as importantly, promote and enhance its strengths.

Yours faithfully,
JANE CALVERT-LEE,
Director, London Region,
Confederation of British Industry,
Centre Point,
103 New Oxford Street, WC1,
February 3.

Tomorrow's London

From the Director of the London Region of the CBI

Sir, It would be quite wrong to consider that London can be treated as just another local authority (report and leading article, January 30): it plays a national and international role. Surely our memories are not so short that we cannot remember the havoc wrought by local politicians who tried to run our great city?

Local functions should be run by local politicians who represent the interests of their residents. However, residents are not the only people who have a stake in the future of London. Those who work and invest should also be considered.

London's strategic functions should be run by people who have the vision and international management experience to implement strategies which will equip the capital to succeed in a fiercely competitive global environment.

Hollywood myths



From Mr Hugo Vickers

Sir, In attacking "the Hollywood myth of how Britain should look", David Robinson (*Life & Times*, February 4) was wrong to cite *My Fair Lady*. It was designed by the quintessentially English Cecil Beaton, who was exported there for ten long months. Beaton conducted George Cukor around London in search of sites, and chose his London doctor's house as inspiration for Higgins's residence.

Beaton regretted that the film was not done entirely on location in London, and eagle-eyed students will notice certain solecisms committed

after Beaton's contract expired: the horses race the wrong way in the Ascot scene, and Audrey Hepburn employs a 1960s watering can in Mrs Higgins's winter garden. But Beaton's two Oscars were well earned.

Yours faithfully,
HUGO VICKERS,
62 Letham Gardens, W8,
February 4.

From Mr James A. Mackay

Sir, David Robinson, in "Welcome to the real Britain", asks if anyone will remember to celebrate the golden jubilee of *Mrs Miniver* this year.

The answer is yes. Sierra Leone has, in fact, just issued a 10 Leone postage stamp showing Greer Garson and Walter Pidgeon with a Battle of Britain fighter in the background. Incidentally, the film caption bears the sub-title MCM 1938 in the upper left-hand corner of the stamp — a curious error pre-dating the film by four years.

Yours faithfully,
JAMES A. MACKAY,
75/5 Lancelfield Quay, Glasgow,
February 4.

BUCKINGHAM PALACE
February 7: The Prince Edward, Chairman, The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Pegasus Project, today attended the Project's Annual Lunch at the Armourer's Hall, 81 Coleman Street, London EC2A 5PU.

[illegible]

Memorial service

Surgeon Rear-Admiral Jim Cox

A service of thanksgiving for the life of Surgeon Rear-Admiral Jim Cox was held yesterday at the Church of the Good Shepherd, Royal Naval Hospital, Plymouth. The Rev John Rawlings officiated, assisted by Father Peter Needham, hospital chaplain.

The Rev Peter Comerford read the lesson and Surgeon Rear-Admiral David Lammiman, Medical Director-General (Naval), gave an address.

GIBBS - On January 1972 at Easter, 10 Kelly (Christall) and Harry Joshua Henry Paul, a brother for Lorna.

DEATHS

GROVES
February 3
2 o'clock

ly, Albert (Berde),
79. Dearty loved
of Doris and loving
of John Donations if
may be sent to The
Masonic Benevolent
Donation, c/o R. C. Talbot,
Byrnedale,
Mason, Mass. 01945.

Belth and Nigel
in-law of Richard
Stephen also a dear
of Sarah, James,
and Edward.
Service and
ion has already taken
Enquires to Ford and

Sunday after Epiphany
TERMINI CATHEDRAL: 8 A.M.; 9:30
GRAY'S INN CHAPEL: No services until
 1 March.
LENDON'S INN CHAPEL: 11:30 AM, To
 BY GILES-ON-THE-FIELD, St. Giles
 High St. WC2: 8 & 12 HC 11 AM, Rev G
 C Taylor: 6:30 PM, Rev P. Smith.
ST PAUL'S, Grosvenor Square, SW1:
 Family Ec: 6:30 Informal Ev.
ST PAUL'S, Wilson Place, SW1:
 Family Ec: 6:30 Informal Ev.

[illegible]

Anniversaries

<p>DEATHS: Mary, Queen of Scots, 1587, executed, Fotheringhay Castle, Northants. 1887: Peter the Great, Tsar of Russia 1682-1725. St. Anthony, 1894: <i>Anna Karenina</i>, Russian novelist, novel, 1894: Peter Kropotkin, geographer and anarchist, Dmitrov, Russia, 1921. 1922: <i>Anna Karenina</i>, Russian novelist, geologist, Merston, Surrey, 1926: Sir Victor Gollancz, writer and publisher, London, 1967.</p> <p>Kidnap and looting followed a <i>raid on the Treasury</i> by the <i>Reds</i> who were holed up in London, 1886.</p>	<p>DEATHS: John Hooper, Bishop of Worcester, burnt at the stake, Gloucester, 1555; Lord Darlington, 1855; <i>Anna Karenina</i>, Russian novelist, Edinburgh, 1894; Nevil Maskelyne, astronomer, royal 1765-1811, Greenwich, 1811; Pyotr Domestov, no. 1921. 1922: <i>Anna Karenina</i>, Russian novelist, geologist, Merston, Surrey, 1926: Sir Victor Gollancz, writer and publisher, London, 1967.</p> <p>Kidnap and looting followed a <i>raid on the Treasury</i> by the <i>Reds</i> who were holed up in London, 1886.</p>
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New Zealand Society
The High Commissioner for New Zealand and Mrs Gair attended the annual dinner of the New Zealand Society held last night at the Royal Garden Hotel, Kensington, to mark the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi. A message from the Prime Minister, New Zealand was read by Mr Alan R.M. Taylor, president of the society, and Mr Austin Mitchell.

Foundation for Science and Technology, London, England, led Brian South, Chairman of the Foundation for Science and Technology, presided at a luncheon for honorary officers and secretaries of learned societies held yesterday at the Royal College of Physicians. Mr Adrian Langley also spoke. Dame Margaret Turner-Warwick, president of the college, was among those present.

Mr Hugh Tunnell to be H. Ambassador to Bahrain.

INSOLVENCY RULES 1986	THE INSOLVENCY RULES 1986 SECT. 2. ORDER 2	THE INSOLVENCY RULES 1986
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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN pursuant to Rule 3.9 of the Insolvency Rules 1986 that a meeting of the creditors of Dyston Alun

Huddersfield, on February 1992 at 12.00 noon. The Joint Administrators' report will be received on the 24th day of February 1992 at 11.30 am. The Joint Administrators' report will be received on the 24th day of February 1992 at 11.30 am. The Joint Administrators' report will be received on the 24th day of February 1992 at 11.30 am.

A creditor will be entitled to vote at the meeting only if details in writing of the debt of the company are submitted to the creditors.

Administrative Receivers at 9 Bond Court, Leeds, LS1 2SN, no later than 12.00 noon on the day of sale.

Rules 1986.
Copies of the Joint Administrative
Receivers' report will be provided

Creditors may vote either in person or by proxy at the Court, Leeds. LSI 25N.

creditor is entitled to vote only in respect of the balance (if any) of

Secured are not entitled to be re-opened or to vote.

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PERSONAL AFFAIRS

WEEKEND TIMES
SECTION PAGE 16

1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 1997; 278: 1039-1044.

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OBITUARIES

SIR GARETH CLAYTON

Air Marshal Sir Gareth (Thomas Butler) Clayton, KCB, DFC and bar, a former air secretary and second world war pilot, died on February 5 aged 77. He was born on November 13, 1914.

"TUBBY" Clayton could well have been dubbed the great survivor. He led raid after raid against Hitler's Reich in the last war, crash-landed at least half a dozen times (once while flying through thick fog to his daughter's christening) and was even fired on by his own side while over Dunkirk. Yet Clayton came through it all without a scratch.

He was operational almost as soon as the second world war started, leading a day-light reconnaissance mission over the Ruhr. All three Blenheims of 107 Squadron from RAF Watlington got back unscathed. But on the next similar sortie all crews were killed. Clayton's survival was by no means entirely due to luck. In May the next year he won the DFC for leading raid number 309 against a heavily defended enemy occupied airfield at Stavanger, Norway. Intercepted by a Messerschmitt-110 on the return flight, Clayton dove to sea level, made use of the cloud cover and dodged the avenging Luftwaffe so successfully that the German eventually gave up and went home, leaving Clayton to return to base, mission accomplished.

Later that year his navigator was severely wounded when Clayton's Blenheim was



riddled by shrapnel after bombing a bridge at Maastricht, in the Netherlands. The fuel tanks spouting out fuel, his wing flaps and undercarriage irreparably jammed Clayton somehow managed a crash landing on his own airfield. But they had to cut open the cockpit with an axe to lift out the wounded navigator on a stretcher. In January 1941 Clayton switched to being a night fighter pilot with 25 Squadron equipped with Beaufighters. Clayton ruefully wrote later that he managed to write off "three of His Majesty's Beaufighters" without ever even seeing a German aircraft.

His most testing time, however, was still to come. This was the period 1943-44 when he found himself assigned to heavy bombers, first with 100 Squadron, then with No 576, a new Lancaster squadron which Clayton, now a wing commander, formed under his command at Elsham Woods, Lincolnshire. Clayton was clearly sensitive to the destruction they were causing as he took part in the huge waves of allied bombers now nightly filling the skies over Nazi Germany.

In the account which his family is publishing as a posthumous tribute to him he graphically describes the holocaust below: Krefeld "bub-

bling like a volcano" for example; or the seven-hour sorties to Berlin culminating in a 20 minute ordeal as they passed over the packed air defences surrounding the German capital. Clayton's reward was a bar to his DFC with a citation praising his inspirational leadership which had turned 576 Squadron into one of Bomber Command's most effective units.

Yet Gareth Clayton had originally joined the RAF because at the time he could think of nothing better to do. Born at Llandudno into a family which had once owned coal mines in North Wales, he did not go to school until he was nine. His own father was a mining engineer with Rio Tinto and young Gareth spent much of his early life abroad — mainly in Argentina and Spain, where he learned to speak fluent Spanish without an accent.

He returned to this country for schooling, but left Rossall, Lancashire, with nothing more illustrious than the scripture prize. Unable to think of a career he would like to pursue, he started to take private flying lessons to fill his time and then was persuaded by an uncle, himself an RAF officer, to join the service.

His first class Spanish, however, was no fluke. He found he was endowed with a natural gift for languages, eventually adding French, Portuguese and German to his armoury. Perhaps this was why he filled a succession of overseas posts after the war. In 1945 he went to China to Cheng Tu in a remote area on the Tibetan border, as part of a six-man RAF training team requested by Chiang Kai-shek. He went to the British embassy in Lisbon as air attaché. He commanded RAF Cottesmore, then RAF Honington before going to SHAPE in France to join the plans and policy division.

He was director of RAF transport for overseas operations in the early 1960s, which involved among other things briefing the cabinet during the first Kuwait emergency. He commanded number 11 group in Fighter Command, 1962-63, served as chief of staff in the Second Allied Tactical Airforce, Germany, and was then briefly chief of staff at RAF Strike Command. Between 1966 and 1969 Clayton held the appointment of director of personal services in the RAF before being made air secretary in 1970. He retired two years later.

Gareth Clayton was not entirely safe in peacetime. In the early 1950s while serving on the staff of Bomber Command at High Wycombe he was taken up by a pilot in a Meteor fighter trainer. The pilot unfortunately forgot he was no longer flying a Canberra and got the stalling speed wrong in consequence. The plane crashed on its port wing-tip in a field. The cockpit broke off from the blazing wreckage and tobogganed across the field to land upside down in a hedge. Clayton, however, once more climbed out more or less unharmed.

Although he walked with the help of a stick, his hip injury was sustained in peacetime Germany, trying to out-skiate youths half his age on a frozen pond. The injury which landed him in hospital did not prevent him from flying Lightnings up to the end of his RAF career.

Gareth Clayton married Marian Keates in 1938. An icing sugar model of his first aircraft, a Hind biplane, adorned their wedding cake. His wife died, however, 18 months ago and he is survived by their three daughters.

Laura May Kendal, actress and mother of two daughters, Felicity and Jennifer, who followed in her footsteps, died on February 5 aged 83. She was born on May 8, 1908.

IN ADDITION to rearing her two actress daughters — Jennifer, who died in 1984, and Felicity Kendal — Laura Kendal had a pivotal role in the Shakespearean touring company she and her husband, Geoffrey, ran in India and which was immortalised in the film *Shakespeare Wallah*. As well as being the company's leading actress, she designed the sets and costumes, making extraordinarily effective use of limited resources. She also had to be mother not only to her daughters — both of whom served their acting apprenticeships in the company — but also to the young and often inexperienced company members.

During a wartime ENSA tour the Kendals fell in love with India and returned a year after the war with their own company. The tour was cut short by the struggles of India's independence. But in 1953 the Kendals and Shakespeareans were back and the company did not disband until the 1950s. Thereafter Geoffrey and Laura continued to tour with two-handers shows. As late as 1985 they were a main attraction at a theatre festival in Bombay.

The company took Shakespeare to the Indian hills in the way that Sybil Thordike and Lewis Casson took Macbeth to the Welsh valleys, bringing the English classics to two generations of Indians. While Geoffrey drummed up the bookings in schools throughout India, she made sure the company arrived at each destination looking immaculate, despite having sometimes travelled Indian rail, third-class.

With dusty benches rather than couches, broken lights and inadequate fans, train conditions were likely to have arrested the enthusiasm of all but the most determined western travellers. The venues were often many miles from the railway station, entailing

LAURA KENDAL



a further journey, with the wardrobe baskets and portable props, by country bus or lorry. The charge for admission was one rupee (about 8p) and it was sufficient to sustain the cost of a 12-strong company.

They depended for their audiences mostly on undergraduates and discovered that Indians had an insatiable appetite for Shakespeare.

The novelty of a band of Europeans appearing with wigs and swords in areas where previously the only Englishmen seen were tax collectors and police superintendents may have accounted for some of their success. But Shakespeare was the main attraction. Tamil, Madras, Bengalis and Punjabis, who were first introduced to the plays as a subject to be mastered before passing the Senior Cambridge examination — a necessary scholastic

achievement for a government clerkship — yielded happily to Shakespeare when it was brought to their town by such an adventurous English company.

Born and brought up in the Lake District, as was Geoffrey, the young Laura Liddell was already a well regarded actress in the Edwardian touring company when the future couple met. In his autobiography, *The Shakespeare Wallah*, Geoffrey describes the first time he saw her at a rehearsal: "She had a pointed chin and a round face, deep brown slanting eyes and a rouseness that made her look almost oriental, and an air of enormous vitality. Never had I seen a more lively woman, or a more interesting actress. Laura was incredibly individual and made every part she played intriguing."

Geoffrey and Laura Kendal flew out to India last year to receive the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for services to the arts in India from the president of India, the first foreigners to be given this honour. Laura Kendal's final visit to India, the land that became her second home, will be made this weekend when her ashes are taken there by her husband.

CHRISTOPHER SKELTON

Christopher Skelton, printer, typographer and publisher, died on February 1 aged 66. He was born on September 3, 1925.

THOUGH a skilled printer and designer, Christopher Skelton's period of greatest creativity had full reign only from the time of his foundation of Skelton's Press in 1968.

Educated at Bablake School, Coventry, he took a degree in English at Oxford. Skelton sought to carry on a family tradition: his uncle was Eric Gill, the wood engraver, type designer and printer. Skelton went to learn to print from Gill's son-in-law, René Hague. He worked for the next 17 years in the Midlands and engaged in the commercial printing work which can be so profitable, and often so very dull. He had, indeed, to buy himself a small treadle-plate press for use in the cellar at home in order, he said, "to save his soul". When the firm he was working for was bought up, he decided to use money that he had inherited from an aunt to found Skelton's Press. Fifteen years later he sold it and went into partnership with his former assistant, Alan Bultitude, to print, without any other staff, as the September Press.

At both the Skelton's Press and at September they were able to lead a double life, printing pork pie labels on the one hand, fine books on the other. Two calligraphic books by David Kindersley



appeared in the early years. *The Death of Hector*, René Hague's version of a text from the *Iliad*, followed. This was elegantly set in Dante typeface, with drawings by Peter Campbell, reproduced by offset. He printed the catalogues for Christopher Hewett's Taranman Gallery, London, which were designed to a

particularly high standard, poetry for the Sceptre and Enitharmon Presses, and much else that sits with quiet ease on the shelves of the discerning.

In 1979 he printed an illustrated catalogue for an exhibition of wood-engravings, *Shall we join the Ladies?*, and was much impressed by

the quality of reproduction that he realised was now possible with printing by offset-litho from retouched bromides. Prompted by Gill's daughter Joan Hague, and inspired by his own enthusiasm, he now started work on *The Engravings of Eric Gill*, which was eventually published in 1983. For this he had to gather the best proofs possible, twice visited America, and was finally able to research at length in the print room at the V&A, which had long been closed. The result was a collection of engravings that fulfilled all expectations, showing almost everything that Gill had cut, the prints carefully related to John Ruskin's earlier, but unillustrated catalogue. Published in a large enough edition, 1,350 copies plus 85 specials, it was possible to price the former at only £110 — and the negatives have recently been used again for a new edition now priced at under £30. It has made Gill's engravings as widely available as he could have wished. In 1988 he printed, again by offset, an excellent reproduction of *The Four Gospels*, first published by the Golden Cockerel Press in 1931 and which included some of Gill's finest engravings. In 1989 Skelton supervised the printing of his final book, a large quarto reproducing Edward Gordon Craig's *Black Figures*.

He leaves his wife, Elizabeth, four sons and three daughters.

GEORGE MORAN

George Moran, director of the Anna Freud Centre, died in Naples, Florida, on January 23 aged 40 of motor neurone disease. He was born on August 30, 1951, in Detroit, Michigan.

FEW child psychoanalysts achieved distinction more rapidly than George Moran. An American citizen with a firm background in academic and educational psychology, he began his post-graduate training in child psychoanalysis at the Anna Freud Centre in London in 1977. Ten years later, at the age of 36, he was appointed director of the same institution, acknowledged worldwide as one of the leading organisations in the field. Many within the profession doubted whether someone without considerable seniority and — at that time — international standing could shoulder such a heavy burden of responsibility. Their misgivings were soon dispelled. Moran brought to the task a rare combination of skills and expertise: clinical, scientific, administrative and financial, to name the more obvious; and he applied them with unceasing vigour and sustained determination.

The few years of his directorship were marked by a mental energy that, to the end, remained undimmed by a cruel and relentless affliction that progressively impaired his bodily capabilities. He worked tirelessly to further the activities for which the centre's worldwide reputation was unmatched — the psychoanalytic understanding of child development both normal and abnormal; the provision of educational and clinical services; extensive research activities; and an intensive full-time training programme in the theory, practice, and broad application of child psychoanalysis and psychotherapy.

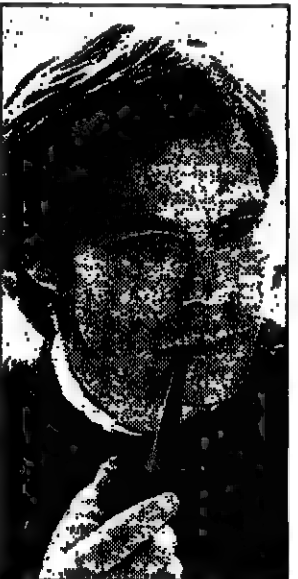
Young and able colleagues were encouraged to accept new responsibilities or pressed into service from elsewhere; but although Moran favoured innovation and fostered fresh ideas he refused to jettison any of those basic principles on which his discipline was founded. His outlook was firmly rooted in the tradition of the founder of the centre, Sigmund Freud's youngest daughter. Indeed, it was as a student who distinguished himself that he earned Anna Freud's wholehearted approval, not easily won.

For all his dedication to psychoanalysis, he never believed that a sound psychology could be practised in isolation from other disciplines. Connections of an informal and co-operative kind already existed between the centre and the psychology department at University College, and the paediatric, endocrine, and child psychiatric

departments at the Middlesex Hospital, and Moran worked hard to strengthen them.

His relationship with the specialists and other staff involved were as fruitful as they were friendly; indeed, they had begun when, still a student, he developed an interest in the psychological complications and management of diabetes in children. His work with them earned him a PhD from the University of London. Moran's subsequent work on the subject and related paediatric problems, and his contributions to the literature, were of lasting importance and acknowledged all over the world.

Another field of importance to which Moran devoted time and energy was the study of atypical development and disorder in children — disturbances that defy customary diagnostic categorisations. In this he worked in close collaboration with his colleagues and was responsible for some elegant and influential insights that have a permanent place in published studies. He made many other contributions. As long as his health permitted, he spoke and lectured on



these topics in many parts of the world. In particular, the centre's traditional links with Yale University, established by Anna Freud, were closely maintained to the benefit of both.

His capabilities had for company an engaging, masculine charm, and a ready sense of humour that was sometimes mischievous and, when occasion demanded, tinged with asperity. In private conversation, this could broaden into a satirical wit. He was decisive, though invariably courteous and well-mannered. He was liked by everyone. His broad interests, ranging from philosophy to English literature, made him an excellent conversationalist in all company.

He is survived by his wife, Perrine and his daughter, Katy.

Nations remember Russia's Columbus

AS AMERICA marks the 500th anniversary of Columbus's discovery of the New World, Danes and the people of the former Soviet Union are celebrating Russian-America's Columbus — the 18th century Danish explorer Vitus Bering, discoverer of the straits separating Siberia and Alaska (Christopher Follett writes).

Bering, born in Horsens, west Denmark, in 1681, sighted Alaska when he sailed from Ohkotsk for Peter the Great 250 years ago. The discovery spurred Tsarist Russian colonial expansion in North America that lasted until 1867, when Alexander II sold the territory to the United States for £13 million. Horsens Museum in Denmark is marking the voyage

with an exhibition of 100 artefacts, including logbooks from the expeditions and documents from the Soviet naval archives, on show for the first time in the West.

Dignitaries from the former Soviet Union attending Bering ceremonies in Horsens last month included sixth and seventh generation descendants of Bering. An £18 million international film production on the life of Bering is planned for release in 1993, starring the British actor Albert Finney, directed by Swedish director Jan Troell and shot in Russia.

Enlisted in Peter the Great's Imperial Russian Navy at the age of 22, Bering led two major expeditions to the easternmost reaches of Russia and beyond.

Dubrovnik's scars laid bare

By MARCUS BINNEY, ARCHITECTURE CORRESPONDENT

THE tragic extent of recent war damage in Dubrovnik is made clear in an exhibition, "Croatia: The Cost of Conflict", which has opened in London. The old walled city escaped almost unscathed until December 6 when more than 500 rockets rained down in five hours. These damaged an estimated 45 per cent of buildings in the old city, destroying 10 per cent entirely, it is claimed.

Every window was shattered. There is no electricity, no water, not even any plastic to put in the windows to keep out the bitter cold. The roofs of many buildings, including important monuments, have collapsed, making many smaller streets virtually impassable.

The front of the 15th century Rector's Palace, the most important single monument in Dubrovnik, has been badly damaged. It was here that successive leaders of the little republic lived amid pomp and ceremony during their month of office. The Franciscan monastery, the Dominican monastery and St Saviour's church have all been severely hit.

In what was one of the most perfectly preserved walled cities in Europe there is hardly a building that has not been damaged by shrapnel, according to the Croatian organisers of the South Bank exhibition. One of them, Melina Davies, said: "Dubrovnik was Croatia's Florence. The cradle of much of Croatia's literature and art." Brilliant diplomacy ensured that for centuries the city was free from attack. The

Turks never set foot in Dubrovnik, dissuaded by a handsome annual tribute. Dubrovnik's survival intact became the more important after the total destruction of Zante to the south, the "Venice of the Ionian Sea", by an earthquake in 1953 which levelled churches, palaces and colonnades. In recent years Dubrovnik's national monument status had ensured that modernisation was carried out with extreme care. About half the city's inhabitants are believed to have remained amid the ruins. The photographs were taken by Miro Kerner, who was wounded five times in the process.

The exhibition continues at the Level 5 gallery of the Royal Festival Hall until March 8.

Latest wills

Latest estates include (net, before tax paid):
Mrs Frances Mary Green, of Pulverbatch, Shropshire, £830,377.
Mrs Monica Gladys Hargreaves, of Dereham, Norfolk, £643,348 net.
Miss Violet Irene Quick, of Tiverton, Devon, £584,587.
Mr Robert Frederick James Parsons, solicitor, of Camberley, Surrey, £1,024,914.
Mrs Marie Vera Potter, of Lowestoft, Suffolk, £580,014.
Mr John William Siggins, of Morpeth, Northumberland, £901,762.

Meeting

Religious Press Group
Sir Sigmund Sternberg, Convenor of the Religious Press Group, presided at a meeting held yesterday at Woburn House, WCI. Mr Michael Latham, MP, Director of the Council of Christians and Jews, and Rabbi Dr Abraham Levy, Spiritual leader of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation, were the speakers.

FEB 8 ON THIS DAY 1915

One of Northcliffe's innovations to brighten the newspaper when he took over in 1913 was to introduce an occasional column on women's clothes. Not even a world war was going to silence the fashion correspondent.

MILITARY MODES IN PARIS.

By Our Fashion Correspondent
The strenuous efforts of the Paris dressmakers to revive trade are showing signs of reward. During the past week their rooms have been full of American buyers who have bought largely from the new collections which have been prepared under very difficult conditions.

When the mobilization order came, the male clerical staff in all the big houses simply closed its books, handed over its keys, and went to join the colours. The women in many instances also left their work to be with their men, for in those days the practical side of their nature was completely subdued by the primitive affection of mother, wife, or sister. Consequently, when business had to be resumed the scattered threads of everyone's leaving were not easy to gather together. The male designers were away, the commercial travellers were absent, the silk and cloth merchants were either serving or unable to deliver orders for the want of men and the means of transport. More serious than all was the fact that the heart of the workwoman was not in her work. To design and make pretty frocks in these days goes against the grain, and if it had not been for the fine common sense of the race, the humorous trades of Paris would be less flourishing than they are.

All the new fashions are a little military in cut and the names of the models are marked: a neat blue serge with a black satin sash is called "Kitchener"; a smart khaki with steel buttons is named "French"; and a "Joffre" of the new French uniform blue is extremely popular.

The short, full skirts show very high boots with Wellington tops, the coats have full basques, rather short waists, sloping shoulders, and waists with high soft collars. Nothing could be less like the fashions of last year than the fashions of this, and if one modifies the inclination to look like a chorus girl in light opera, they are perfectly come to pass and very practical. The danger certainly lies in the shortness and width of the skirts, and it will be for the woman of the world to put her veto on anything like extravagance in these directions.

The mannequins still walk as if they were in tight skirts, from which it may be supposed, for there is no need for any restriction in stride, as some skirts are five yards wide, and all of them are over three. The little sack coat will be the favourite one, I think, and the box-pleat skirt, or the skirt with three bouffants, or the one with panels and pleats any one of these will find greater favour than the very full, bell-shaped model.

All dresses have long sleeves, and the décolleté neck, although not altogether out of date, is only to be seen on very demure afternoon dresses. In everything there is a restraint and moderation which is suitable to the times in which we live.

It was pleasant to see the vendors going about their business with that simple French vigour for which they are to be so much admired. Many of them are in mourning, some of them continue to knit socks as they stand by their particular clients to see the models go by, all of them speak of the war, and none of them show any depression, whether they lost it or not. They have themselves well in hand, and now that they have business to do they will do it well.

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● SPORT 27-34
● OLYMPICS GUIDE 30, 31

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 8 1992

BUSINESS EDITOR JOHN BELL

MONEY

Profile

Robin Biggam dreamt of becoming a foreign correspondent for *The Times*, but instead pushed himself to take evening classes in accountancy, which although "tough and incredibly boring," started him on the road to his present position as chairman of BICC, the construction conglomerate. Page 17



Surrender values

Surrendering a unified with-profits policy in the early years could leave policyholders hundreds of pounds worse off than if they had taken out a conventional policy. Page 20

Korea opening

British investors may soon be able to buy unit trusts investing in Korean and Mexican stocks but they must spread their money to avoid the pitfalls of these volatile markets. Page 22

You can come home the cheques been cleared at last.



Letters... Page 24

Tax claim aid

Brenda Deguid will be among the staff working on a free telephone service, which begins tomorrow, set up by the Inland Revenue to help taxpayers claim refunds of tax they should not have paid on interest or dividends. Up to eight million people have paid too much tax since April, when the rules on building society and bank interest were changed and the composite rate tax was abolished. Callers will be connected with their local tax office. Page 22



BES buybacks

Concern is growing that housing associations involved in assured-exit business expansion schemes may not be able to meet their commitments to buy back property. Page 21

Musical investors

The Kings Head theatre is offering members of the public the chance to invest £500 to bring its production of the musical, *Spread a Little Happiness*, to the West End. Page 23



Plugging holes

The Financial Services Act is five years old, but the system of investor protection is undergoing an overhaul to plug holes in its defences against fraudsters. Page 19

Both the dollar and Wall Street tumble

Job cuts cast doubt over US recovery

By COLIN NARBROUGH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

A SHARP fall in employment in America's retail and manufacturing industries in January fuelled market hopes of a cut in interest rates and sent the dollar and Wall Street into steep retreat.

Adding to concern about America's recovery from recession was fresh evidence that recovery has also petered out in Canada, where unemployment rose last month.

The American labour department's closely watched non-farm payroll series indicated a disturbing fall of 91,000 jobs, instead of the

21,000 increase that Wall Street had been expecting.

The data, the first of the important official indicators for January, was seen as confirmation that the American economy is failing to respond to the authorities' efforts to foster recovery. The dollar dropped 2.5 pence in response, to stand at DM1.5645, its weakest for almost a month, at the Frankfurt close. The Dow Jones industrial index fell 30.41 points to 3,225.18.

Michael Boskin, chief economic adviser to the White House, said the economy would remain sluggish for a

couple of months and that unemployment could rise slightly in the months ahead. But he said it would subsequently start to fall as the economy picked up to achieve the 2.2 per cent growth that the administration has forecast for this year.

Mr Boskin underlined that meeting the growth target would be more assured if Congress approved President Bush's growth package, or something close to it.

The American unemployment rate was stuck at 7.1 per cent in January, a five-year high, with 8.9 million out of work. On a seasonally adjusted basis, unemployment rose by 38,000 last month, bringing the total number of jobs shed since the recession started in the summer of 1990 to 2.5 million. The disappointing jobs data followed signs of some improvement in the economy, foremost of which was in housing.

Brian Hilliard, economist at Strauss Turnbull, said the latest figures showed continued weakness that was likely to be confirmed in retail sales and industrial output figures next week. Despite the greater optimism about housing, he expected the construction industry to have been flat in January. Although the pressure on the Federal Reserve Board to ease the monetary reins is now increased, Mr Hilliard cautioned against reading permanent doom and gloom into recent indicators.

In addition to a rise in the number of jobless, the aver-

age length of time people were unemployed also lengthened to 16.4 weeks in January from 15.3 weeks in December. The number of people employed part-time who want full-time jobs rose by 400,000 in January to 6.7 million.

Part of the dollar retreat yesterday was attributed to a shift of expectations about the way German interest rates will move. This followed comments on Thursday by Helmut Schlesinger, the Bundesbank president, which were taken as a signal that there will be no German easing before the summer. Dr Schlesinger said he saw no indications of a loosening in German monetary policy because of strong growth in the German money supply.

Canadian figures showed that the jobless rate edged up to 10.4 per cent in January from 10.3 per cent in December. Statistics Canada said the number of employed Canadians fell by 13,000 to 12.3 million. A 40,000 fall in full-time employment was concentrated among men, as was a 27,000 increase in part-time employment.

A senior government official in Ottawa, meanwhile, said Canada's gross domestic product was flat in the fourth quarter of 1991. He said the same quarter was flat in America, and Canada expected broadly the same picture. Canadian GDP rose 0.2 per cent in the third quarter after 1.4 per cent in the second, following four consecutive quarters of shrinkage.

Bundesbank says no split on summit

By WOLFGANG MÜNCHAU

THE Bundesbank council is attempting to dispel speculation about a split on the assessment of the Maastricht summit by rallying around the official position, which welcomes the agreement on economic and monetary union as "broadly in line with recommendations".

In a statement yesterday, the Bundesbank refrained from attacking the lack of agreement on political union at Maastricht, and noted merely that economic and

political union should go hand in hand.

At a news conference in Frankfurt, Helmut Schlesinger, the Bundesbank's president, denied there had been disagreement among the council members and said that "as usual with such speculation, it was wrong". He said the statement had been agreed by the Bundesbank's entire central council.

However, the comments on Maastricht contained some diplomatically worded criticisms and warnings. The central bank cautioned against strict timetables for the introduction of a single currency, saying "the fulfilment of entry criteria and conditions of convergence should not be restricted by a time frame".

The statement also reiterated the Bundesbank's previous demands that European central banks become independent as soon as possible and that governments should restrict budget deficits to the limits agreed at Maastricht. Meanwhile, there was further bad economic news with the announcement that west German industry orders fell by a provisional 2.5 per cent in December, resulting in a year-on-year fall of 3.8 per cent. The slowdown was the result of falling domestic orders, in line with a recent trend indicating that economic activity slowed down towards the end of last year.

Jürgen Möllemann, the economics minister, said the figures provided proof of economic uncertainty.

Lloyd's names settle for £4m

By JONATHAN PRYNN

A GROUP of 500 Lloyd's names who have had to pay out up to £80 million through American environmental pollution losses have reached a £4 million settlement with the Lloyd's agencies that they were suing.

The names were on the Warlow syndicate 533 and issued writs for negligence against the Warlow managing agency and 40 members' agencies in October 1989.

The settlement is thought to be the first between litigating names and the errors and omissions insurance underwriters that dispute the legal actions brought by names.

It has led to widespread speculation that the much larger Outhwaite court case,

which has been adjourned since Monday, may also end in a settlement.

Tom Beryon, the former Conservative MP who headed the Warlow Names Steering Committee, said that the decision to settle came after the discovery that the maximum award that could be made to the names was £8.5 million.

The names have already spent £1.5 million in legal fees, while the estimated cost of bringing the case to court is £3 million.

The settlement represents 13.5 per cent of the names' exposure to the syndicate, compared with losses to date of 270 per cent and still rising; that result means names

will recuperate exactly 5 per cent of their losses.

Mr Beryon admitted that the relatively small settlement did not represent a huge victory for the names but said it would at least make the closure of the 1984 year more likely.

He added that Lloyd's, and in particular its chairman, David Coleridge, had played a "creative and helpful role" in the settlement.

David Harrison, a director of Harrison Brothers Underwriting Agencies, the members agency, emphasised that the settlement had "nothing to do with Lloyd's".

It had instead been a "purely practical decision" on the part of the errors and

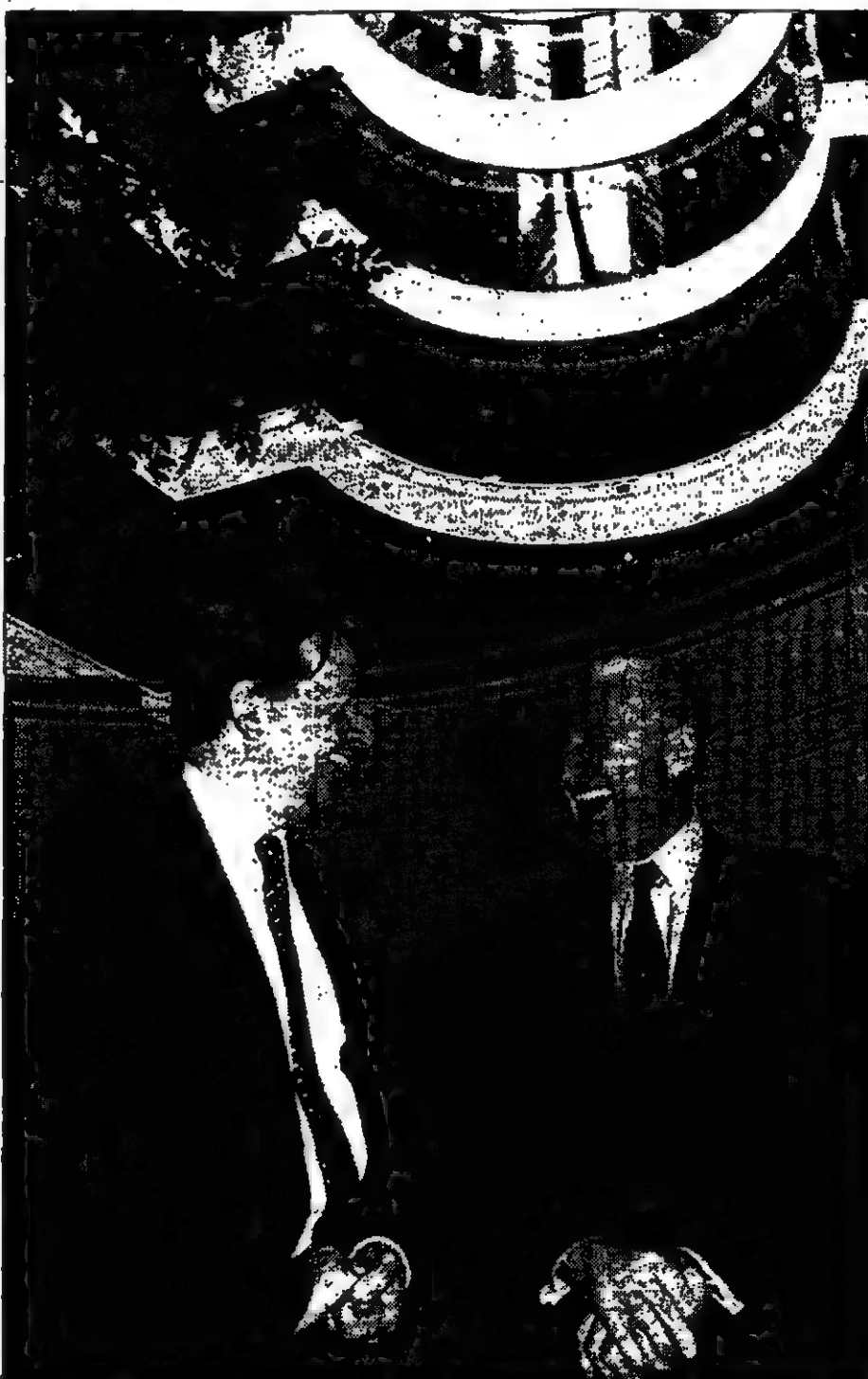
omissions underwriters to reduce costs. No principle of liability has been established through the settlement.

However, he added that nobody at Lloyd's would be comfortable with the establishment of a precedent in which a limited group of names from a syndicate comes away with settlement, however small, after bringing a legal action.

"It puts members' agents in an awkward position," Mr Harrison said.

A spokesman for Lloyd's said the corporation had not been directly involved but that it always tried to "facilitate a settlement where it is in the best interests of the society."

Wolseley fixes French connection



Sealing an Anglo-French marriage: Jeremy Lancaster and Pierre Brossette

WOLSELEY, the world's largest plumbing products supplier, has acquired Brossette, the leading French company in that market, for £795 million (Jonathan Prynn writes).

The purchase marks a change of strategy for Wolseley, which is the market leader in America and the UK but had little presence on the Continent. Jeremy Lancaster, chairman and managing director of the Worcester-shire-based group, said the acquisition reflected the trend towards Europe.

The opportunity to buy Brossette, which has been controlled by the family that founded it in 1841, was too good to miss, he said. The French company had a similar product range to Wolseley's Plumb Centers.

Wolseley will pay a total of Fr930.95 million cash for Brossette. The deal is being financed by £10 million of bank debt and an issue of 21.47 million new Wolseley shares to raise £85 million.

Pierre Brossette, chairman and president of the French company, remains with it for the time being. He said the family was selling out because there was no successor and because of the need to operate on a European scale.

Brossette made a pre-tax profit of Fr108.4 million for the year to December 31 1990, when it had net assets of Fr269.3 million. For the year to last December 31, the company's profits are warranted at not less than Fr101.4 million and its debts at not more than Fr315 million. The deal will increase Wolseley's gearing from about 20 per cent to between 25 and 30 per cent.

Mr Lancaster said that Brossette would form the springboard for further expansion in Europe, both in the fragmented German market and in the Mediterranean region. The shares closed up 1p at 414p.

Temps, page 18

THE POUND

US dollar 1.8342 (+0.0167)
German mark 2.8687 (-0.0015)
Exchange index 91.4 (+0.2)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share 1945.1 (-16.1)
FT-SE 100 2617.2 (-17.1)
New York Dow Jones 3248.43 (-7.16)
Tokyo Nikkei Ave 22107.12 (+2.20)

INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base 10 1/2%
3-month Interbank 10 1/2%
3-month eligible bills 9 1/2%
US: Prime Rate 6 1/2%
Federal Funds 3 3/4%
3-month Treasury Bills 3.74-3.73%
30-year bonds 10 3/4-10 3/8%

CURRENCIES

London: New York: £/\$ 1.8345
£/DM 2.8682
£/Sfr 2.5584
£/FF 6.7778
£/Yen 229.78
£/Index 81.9
ECU £0.71497
SDR £0.74477
S. DRI 291183

London forex market close

GOLD

London Fixing: AM \$355.40 pm \$356.20
Close \$356.00-356.50 (£193.90-194.40)
New York: Comex \$356.25-356.75

NORTH SEA OIL

Brent (Feb) ... \$18.70 bbl (\$18.55)

RETAIL PRICES

RPI: 135.7 December (1987-100)

* Denotes midday trading price

Who ya gonna buy? Ghostbusters

By MARTIN BARROW

SCUNTHORPE is hardly Manhattan but there is a common link — Ghostbusters crisps. Well, not crisps, to be precise. Schoolboys will tell you that Ghostbusters are crunchy potato twirls. What they may not know is that they are made in Scunthorpe... and they are now British.

Golden Wonder, the snack food company synonymous with home-grown delicacies such as Wotsits and Pot Noodles, has bagged a clutch of American-inspired goodies including Ghostbusters snacks, paying a mouthwatering £44 million for Scunthorpe-based Sooner Snacks.

Sooner is being acquired from Borden Inc. of America, adding a host of schoolboy favourites including Nik Naks, Wheat Crunchies and, of course, Ghostbusters. Dalgely, which owns Golden Wonder, is already Britain's third-largest producer of bag snacks behind PepsiCo — owner of Smiths and Walkers — and United Biscuits. Sooner boasts sales of £57



million, increasing the enlarged Golden Wonder's annual turnover to almost £300 million. The acquisition does not thrust Golden Wonder ahead of its main rivals in sales but it gives the company a strong presence in what is known in the business as the impulse sector. Golden Wonder's snacks are ever present in supermarkets. Sooner crisps, on the other

hand, are popular in pubs and clubs, presumably to improve the taste of the beer, and in garages. There is also a good chance that the person sitting next to you in the cinema, driving you to distraction by munching and crunching his way through the film, is eating a Sooner snack.

Maurice Warren, chief executive of Dalgely, won't be too annoyed by

filmmakers' anti-social habits if Sooner can deliver the financial benefits he anticipates. In 1990, the last year for which Sooner's accounts are available, the company earned trading profits of £3.9 million and at the year-end net assets were £18 million. Mr Warren believes that cost savings of around £2 million can be achieved through reduced overheads and integrated production, resulting in a wider range of snacks at Scunthorpe.

Mr Warren is also enthused by Sooner's fleet of 200 vans that distribute snacks to smaller retailers and can be used to supply other Golden Wonder products, although pub landlords may not yet be ready to sell pot noodles over the bar.

With 80 per cent of the snack food market controlled by the big three companies, further acquisitions in the sector are unlikely but Mr Warren continues to follow up possible deals for other Dalgely divisions. The group owns Spillers Foods, which produces petfoods, and Homepride, the flour and sauces maker.

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NEW EDITION

Last-quarter fall in insolvencies brings little cheer

BY COLIN NARBROUGH, ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

A MODEST fall in insolvencies in the final quarter of last year was encouraging, but it would be premature to speak of a turnaround in the economy, according to the Association of British Chambers of Commerce.

The association was commenting on government figures that showed a 5 per cent drop in company insolvencies to 5,554 last quarter. However, this represented a 21 per cent increase on the same quarter of 1990 and boosted total insolvencies for 1991 to 21,827, an annual rise of 45 per cent. The total accounted

for 2.3 per cent of active companies registered with Companies House, which underlined the scale of damage recession has inflicted on British business.

Ron Taylor, the ABCC director general, said it was "encouraging" to see a fall in the seasonally adjusted figure for company liquidations, after eight consecutive quarters of increases. "But we cannot afford to be complacent. One in 43 companies going into liquidation in 1991 has had a serious impact on business confidence. There could not be a company in Britain that had not been hit by a bad debt from a firm going to the wall, and smaller firms, in particular, were suffering severely," he said.

He cautioned against reading the final-quarter figures as evidence of turnaround, since some lag could be expected between any significant downturn in insolvencies and economic recovery. He also forecast continued difficulties for companies in funding work in progress as the economy picked up, and did not expect the final-quarter data to reverse the downturn in business confidence shown in the ABCC's latest survey.

"They will indeed reinforce present caution in British boardrooms about investment intentions," Mr Taylor said. "Recovery continues to be a long and slow process."

The government data showed individual, or personal, insolvencies up 11 per cent last quarter to 7,759 to stand 82 per cent above the final quarter of 1990. Personal insolvencies for 1991 were up 83 per cent at 25,640.

Despite the gloomy picture provided by the insolvency figures, the latest worldwide optimism survey from Dun & Bradstreet, the leading American business information group, shows that British executives' expectations for higher profits this quarter have improved. But it notes that overall expectations in Europe remain muted, with sales optimism suffering a three-point fall, against a two-

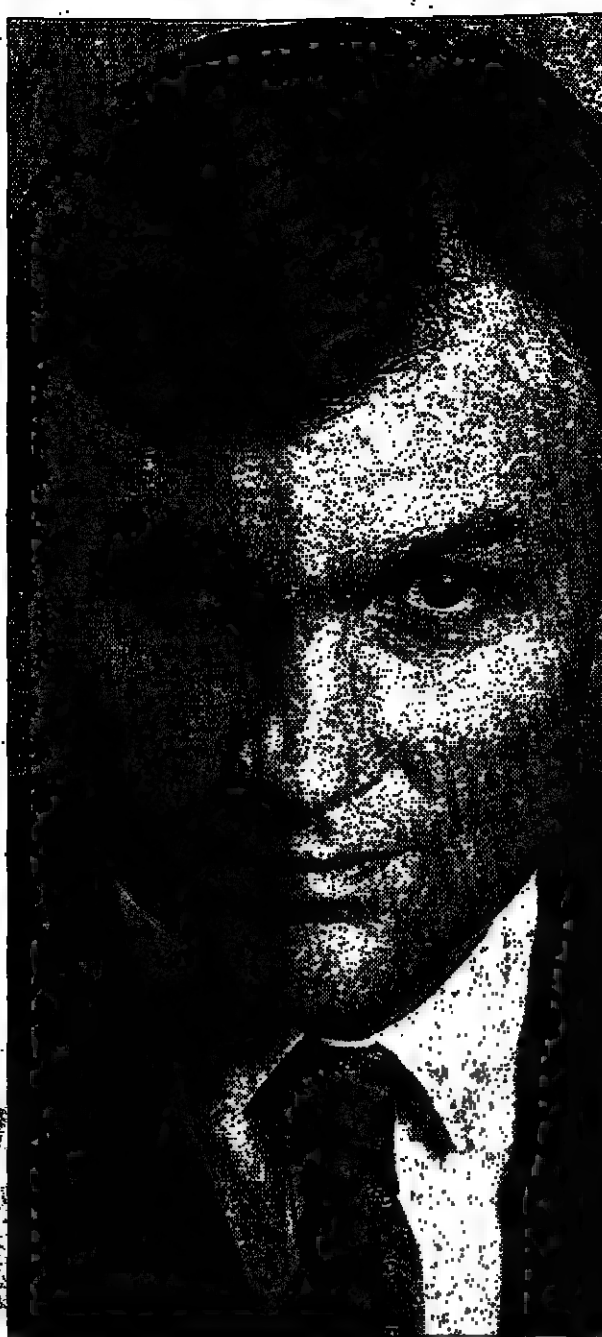
point rise in optimism about the profit outlook. Expectations for higher prices in Europe, the main focus of British trade, have also climbed three points, driven by sharp increases in Germany, France and Switzerland.

Joseph Duncan, chief economist at D&B, said: "Overall, the employment outlook in Europe is grim. Nearly every country reported declining levels of optimism about increased first-quarter employment." The European employment optimism index has now shown negative for over a year. The survey of nearly 11,000 executives in 14 countries showed world business expectations for sales and profits this quarter at the near-record lows seen during the Gulf war.

A survey from Britain's Federation of Civil Engineering Contractors shows that nine out of ten civil engineering firms are operating on lower margins than a year ago, the sixth consecutive quarterly survey to show more than 80 per cent of companies with declining margins. In the previous survey, 85 per cent reported lower margins. In the latest sampling, only 1 per cent of the companies involved were able to report higher margins, while 9 per cent said they were unchanged.

Order books are, however, showing a slightly improved trend compared with October. Some 24 per cent of companies now report higher orders, compared with 16 per cent in October. Firms reporting a deterioration in order books dropped to 50 per cent from 61 per cent.

Randal Bale, the federation chairman, said the fall in margins, despite the easing of cost pressures, was not simply due to a fall in the workload, as civil engineering had held up better during the recession than other sectors of the construction industry. He said companies that were previously concentrating on building had joined the competition for civil engineering business.



Simplified structure: Archie Norman of Asda

Norman shuffles board at Asda

By Gillian Bowditch

ARCHIE Norman, Asda Group's new chief executive, has reorganised the senior management of the group into a more simplified structure, to concentrate on improving the fortunes of the main Asda supermarket business. Mr Norman is taking on the additional role of chief executive of Asda Stores.

The changes involve a switch of roles for Tony Campbell and Richard Harker. Asda's former joint managing directors, Mr Campbell becomes trading director responsible for co-ordinating buying, merchandising and logistics. Mr Harker becomes retail director. He will be responsible for store operations, services and security. Jonathan Fox, personnel director, has resigned and a replacement will be announced shortly. No other departures or additions to senior management team are expected. Phil Cox, finance director, will be responsible for systems, Asda manufacturing and MFI, in addition to finance. John Duggan, managing director of Gazeley, Asda's property division, will head a single property division.

Paul Dowling is responsible for a single, integrated PR and communications function, reporting to Mr Norman. The executive members of the group board are Mr Norman, Mr Harker, Mr Campbell and Mr Cox.

Power contract limits eased

By Graham Seabright, Financial Editor

STEPHEN Littlechild, director general of electricity supply, is to sweep away the intended eight-year limit on the ability of National Power and PowerGen to make contracts directly with industrial customers of the 12 electricity distribution companies.

The decision will not, however, come into effect until April 1993, so that distributors will not be left with cancelled contracts for which they have already arranged electricity supply cover.

The move follows an application by National Power, which is the subject of Professor Littlechild's ruling. A similar application by PowerGen

would almost certainly be approved.

Meanwhile, the proportion of distributors' business that National Power is entitled to bid for in 1992-3 has been increased, in three different groupings, from 7 per cent to 9 per cent, from 10 to 15 per cent and from 12.5 to 17.5 per cent.

The interim limitation will also remove much of any competitive advantage National Power might have had from 'immediate freedom', because small independent power stations projects will be easier to complete. The eight-year moratorium was introduced to allow distributors to

be able to make confident forecasts in their privatisation prospectuses as well as leaving room for independents.

Professor Littlechild increased the limits in four distributor areas from the original 7 per cent in May 1990, but refused any further extension in January 1991. He said he had changed his mind because of "serious commercial pressures" facing large companies. The two big generators are still constrained against discriminatory pricing in contracts.

Shares in the generators eased on the announcement while those of the distributors generally rose in relief.

Civil engineering 'has further to fall'

THE civil engineering industry has yet to reach the bottom of the recession and firms expect to continue shedding jobs this year, according to a survey. Two fifths of companies feared job losses and a third predicted falling orders, according to the Federation of Civil Engineering Contractors. Firms reporting better order books increased compared with a year ago but most of the 156 companies questioned (62 per cent) said orders were worse.

"The results again show workload and jobs falling, and set to fall further before we reach the bottom of the recession," said Randal Bale, federation chairman. "Improvement in civil engineering contractors' profitability needs an upturn in building as well as higher spending on constructing and maintaining Britain's infrastructure."

CML profit warning

SHARES in CML Microsystems dropped 56p to 247p after the USM-quoted electronic components group issued a profits warning. CML's usually strong final quarter is understood to have suffered from a fall in worldwide semiconductor sales; only the American market is thought to have held up. As a result, the group reviewed orders for January to March. It concluded that second-half pre-tax profits are likely to be "moderately below" the first-half figure of £2.37 million, although the board is confident of the medium- and long-term outlook. Analysts have cut their full-year profit forecasts from £5.5 million to about £4.3 million (£4.85 million).

SWEB debt move

SOUTH Western Electricity (SWEB) has made its first foray into the capital markets by setting up a £100 million multi-currency commercial paper programme. The programme, which will be used for working capital and general corporate funding, has been given the top A-1 plus and P-1 ratings by the leading rating agencies. The programme was arranged by NatWest Capital Markets, and the dealers are NatWest, Lloyds Bank and Midland Bank. John Sellers, SWEB's finance director, said that the programme "will provide a cost-effective means of displacing some of our existing short-term borrowings". He was confident it would be a success.

Tokyo brokers shrink

JAPAN'S scandal-plagued brokerage industry shrank by 10,000 workers in the second half of last year, the first decline since 1979, the Japan Securities Dealers Association said yesterday. Employees at 267 brokerages, including 50 foreign brokers, totalled 156,558 at the end of 1991, down from 166,965 at the end of June 1991, and down from 158,601 at the end of 1990. Shrinking employee bonuses and commissions, after a prolonged slump in stock prices slashed company earnings, also prompted many to quit. Still others were dismissed or retired early as part of brokerages' efficiency plans. "Many brokerages are struggling to cut costs," one industry source said.

P-E to hold payout

P-E International, the management and computer consultancy which suffered a 33 per cent decline in first-half profits, said it plans to pay a maintained final dividend of 4.2p, giving an unchanged total of 6.2p, when it reports in March. The company also announced that Hugh Lang, aged 60, is to step down as executive chairman after the annual meeting on May 20. George Cox, the former managing director of Butler Cox, will succeed him. Mr Cox, aged 51, has joined the P-E board as a director and as executive chairman designate. P-E shares eased 4p to 91p, after touching 97p.

Packer float details due

DETAILS of the flotation of Kerry Packer's magazine unit, Australian Consolidated Press (ACP), will be released on Monday, according to Ord Minnett Securities, the underwriter. Press reports have said Mr Packer's privately owned Consolidated Press Holdings (CPH) will sell 55 per cent of its ACP magazine interests to raise about Aus\$475 million (£196 million). Last month, Consolidated Press said that up to Aus\$508.3 million would be raised through the flotation of 51 per cent of Valassis Communications, Mr Packer's American advertising coupon insert business.

IIC asset value up 5%

THE net asset value of the Independent Investment Company, a trust managed by Ivory & Sirue, stood at 57.7p a share at end-December. This represents a rise of 5 per cent in the first six months of the financial year, and a 10.3 per cent advance when compared with end-December 1990. Pre-tax revenue in the six months to end-December 1991 fell to £582,000, against £798,000 last time. Earnings dropped to 0.4p (0.59p) per share. Once again, no interim dividend is being proposed.

Kvaerner buys Enserch firms

FROM REUTERS IN OSLO

KVAERNER, the Norwegian offshore and shipbuilding firm, is paying £15.5 million for engineering firms in America and Britain from Enserch Corp.

Last year, the companies had a turnover of £46 million and a pre-tax profit of £2.3 million, Kvaerner said. The firms being purchased were H&G Offshore Engineering UK and Enserch's Earl and

Wright units in both the America and Britain.

Kvaerner wishes to expand its foreign activities in the offshore area to include the entire North Sea. Thus it is natural to acquire an engineering subsidiary in Britain, Kvaerner said. The British firm will be Kvaerner H&G Offshore Ltd, with a subsidiary Earl and Wright, and work with projects linked around the Pacific.

Bass sues vendors of Holiday Inns

FROM PHILIP ROBINSON IN NEW YORK

BASS, Britain's biggest brewer, is suing the former American owners of its Holiday Inns chain for unspecified damages, alleging it was seriously misled when paying \$2.25 billion to create the world's largest hotel chain almost 30 months ago.

The action is against Promus Cos, which is based in Memphis, a company now run by the former managers of Holiday Inns Corporation which controlled Holiday Inns at the time of the deal. Bass says Promus intentionally misled it about the condition of many of the hotels, their compliance with various planning laws and their leases. The deal gave Bass 1,600 hotels worldwide with 320,600 rooms.

The lawsuit claims Holiday Inns has millions of dollars in potential liabilities of which Bass was unaware at the time of the merger, and the brewer says Promus is not meeting the terms of a pre-merger tax-sharing agreement.

After the purchase, Bass said it would spend \$1 billion refurbishing the chain's hotels. Bass declined to comment on the case, but confirmed the suit had been filed. Promus, which retained the non-core Holiday Inns businesses of Harrah's Hotel and Casinos, the Embassy, Hampton, and Homewood Suites hotel chains, said it does not discuss pending litigation. Bass's purchase, of

Holiday Inn was described by analysts at the time as an expensive deal.

It came among the wave of high-priced hotel deals that saw Grand Metropolitan sell its Inter-Continental chain to Seibu Saison of Japan for \$2.15 billion, and Ladbroke Group buy Hilton International for just over \$1 billion.

Ian Prosser, Bass chairman, said then-Bass was buying the brand name of Holiday Inn as much as anything else. "It's not every day you become the world's No 1 in such a large-scale market as hotels."

National Westminster Bank Mortgage Rate

With effect from 24 January 1992 for borrowers whose applications have been signed but whose mortgages have not been drawn, and from 1 March 1992 for existing borrowers, the NatWest Mortgage Rate payable under current Mortgage Deeds and Conditions of Offer will be reduced from 11.55% to 10.99%. This change will be reflected in existing borrowers' repayments from 5 or 22 March 1992.

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

When the axe fell it caught David Plowright completely by surprise. Gerry Robinson, Granada group's chief executive, came to the point quickly: "I can't work with you, David. I want you to resign as executive chairman. The board will back me up."

Business - The Sunday Times tomorrow

BUSINESS PROFILE: Robin Biggam

Rise and rise of a reluctant accountant

BICC's chairman has a fascination for history, although his career took a different course, Carol Leonard finds

Thirty-three years ago, in a semi-detached house in Carlisle, Lanarkshire, Robin Biggam was shut away in his bedroom, poring over accountancy books — not that he really wanted to be an accountant. He cherished a dream that one day he might go to university, then become a foreign correspondent for *The Times*.

He was, and still is, fascinated by history and current affairs, but times were hard, money was short, and Biggam's father, who spent his working life with British Linen Bank, concluded that as all the chartered accountants he had met appeared to have plenty of money, this would be a good profession for his only son.

Biggam's father, an elder in the local Presbyterian church, had instilled the work ethic into all three of his children and Biggam applied himself dutifully to this career course. At the age of 17, he was articled to a firm in Glasgow and he attended classes five evenings a week for the next five years.

"It was tough and incredibly boring," recalls Biggam, now aged 53 and chairman of BICC, the 1937 million cables, engineering and Balfour Beatty construction conglomerate. "I'm not a natural accountant, I'm a natural historian, but there was a feeling that I had to do it. That there would be no future for me unless I had the determination to actually swot up and get through the exams, plus the thought of what might happen to me if I did not."

In the rare moments when he contemplated the prospect of failure, he would look about him at the lifestyle of his neighbours: coal miners and steelworkers at nearby Ravenscraig. The young Biggam knew that he was different. Or, more to the point, he knew that he wanted to be different.

"It sounds trite, but I really wanted to get on and do something with my life. I wanted more than my parents had had and more than the people around me had had. I felt that there must be

more to life than sitting around in Lanarkshire for the next 50 years."

Even at Lanark Grammar, where he was good at sport as well as his studies — he was a year ahead of his age group — he was never fully part of the crowd. "I was always with the crowd but I was also always just a little bit apart. I had a driving force that made me somehow different. People who knew me at school would probably remember me, even at that stage, as being pretty ambitious. I don't think they would be surprised to see me now." Biggam lives in a large Georgian house with two acres of grounds in Bedfordshire, owns another home in Portugal, is looking for a *plein-air* in London, and draws what he describes as a "ridiculous" salary of £230,000.

That salary can be justified by BICC's growth in profits from £101 million in 1986, the year he took the helm, to £183 million in 1990. Earnings per share, in the same period, have almost doubled.

The cables business, which has also doubled in size, now accounts for 40 per cent of turnover and 75 per cent of profits. BICC is now one of the three biggest cable companies in the world. If Biggam, who became finance director of CI Fibres at the

age of 35, then went to work for ICL and Dunlop, alongside Sir Michael Edwards, has one regret, it is, he says, that he sacrificed his youth.

"Between the ages of 17 and 22, I was working through the day and studying through the evening. It has, perhaps, changed in Scotland now, but when I was young, people who came from very humble but Presbyterian backgrounds, and who wanted to make a success of their lives, believed in hard work and no play. Education was the way to improve yourself and escape. That's why I was so determined that my own children would go to university."

Biggam's children have fulfilled his ambition. Ross, aged 28, is employed by the Houses of Parliament as an adviser on Euro-



Family first: Robin Biggam, relaxing at home with his wife, Betty, likes to keep his private and public lives separate

pean affairs to the select committees — a job his father would love to do. Jennifer, aged 25, buys television time for clients at Saatchi & Saatchi; and Carolyn, aged 22, is a student at Goldsmiths' College. Biggam says: "She wants to be a primary school teacher, like her mother." Biggam's wife, Betty, also a Scot, teaches two days a week. Of the three children, it is Jennifer who is most like her father: "both in character and looks," says Biggam. "She is stubborn and determined."

Mrs Biggam agrees with his indirect self-description. "Yes, he is stubborn. He holds out for something he believes is right and nine times out of ten he is right. He is a very uncomplicated person, very straightforward, terribly honest, straight as a die and very generous with me and the family." Biggam is not, she says, a workaholic but a

family man. He has never put his career first, but although he makes friends easily, entertains often, and is a warm and generous host, he is not spontaneously open. He makes a point of differentiating between business associates and personal friends and, almost without exception, keeps the two worlds apart. "He is quite an open person but he always keeps a little bit back until he knows you really well. Deep down, he is a very private person and so am I. As I do, he finds it difficult to talk about himself. Perhaps it is modesty; but not like to blow your own trumpet."

I suggest that this paragon of virtue must have some faults. She thinks long and hard. "He flips around the channels on the television without telling me," she says. "Yes, of course it annoys me." I ask Biggam the same question. He too pauses for

thought. He is not afraid of silence. He is then slightly more forthcoming: "I'm intolerant and inconsiderate." Both are claims his wife would refute. The prospect of modesty again rears its head.

Intolerance and lack of consideration are traits out of keeping with his political leanings. Biggam was a founder member of the SDP, says he is not, however, a believer in lost causes, and that his political allegiance now oscillates between the Liberals and the Conservatives. "I really believe that politics is far too confrontational in this country. Other European countries seem able to prosper with coalitions and we keep telling ourselves that it is impossible in this country. We move from one extreme to the other. Politics of the extreme are certainly not conducive to running a business."

Biggam has a habit of abbrevi-

ating sentences. It is a sign, perhaps, of a quick mind. Colleagues will attest that this is true, that he is quick at solving problems, quick at assessing individuals, and that the one thing guaranteed to irritate him is a long-winded subordinate.

Barry Keats, BICC's personnel director and one of the few business associates to have been invited into the Biggam family home, says: "He does have an extremely fast mind, one of the fastest I have ever come across, and he does get irritated if you try to flannel him. He can be demanding to work for, he is a tough manager and he needs to be in a tough environment, but he is also a very nice guy. He wanders around the office in his shirt sleeves, he is very approachable, but anyone who cannot encapsulate all that they want to say to him in five minutes will not

survive." Biggam in his shirt sleeves looks tall and fit. His hair is grey but thick. He swims twice a week at the RAC Club and plays golf on Saturday mornings. He is, Keats says, more a man's man than a ladies' man. "He is more of a 'pint down the golf club' than a 'pint down the pub' type of person."

Biggam is not naturally gregarious, nor is he quite as straightforward as is claimed. He admits that he has a public face and a private face and that no individual has seen both. "I do have quite a lot of friends but I'm quite happy just to be on my own. I'm very content with my own company. Actually, I think I need space on my own more than I need people. Even years ago, when I went on holidays with the kids, from time to time I would go and climb a mountain on my own, rather than do something with them — just to be alone with my own thoughts, able to go where I wanted."

He is not new. It has not been brought about by his changed lifestyle. His wife, who met him in 1958, says: "He is still the same person that he's always been. He has not changed at all." Picture again the grammar school boy. He was popular but, of his own volition, he remained on the fringe of the crowd.

In an attempt to marry up Biggam's private and public faces, I talk to him again about his being cool, calm, tough and direct at work. "Perhaps I'm seeking perfection all the time. I try to set a very high standard — but warm, caring and emotional at home. He fidgets uncomfortably as I persist. Is he finding it difficult to pull back the shutters? "You could be right." Is he shy? "I think probably deep down I am quite shy." He laughs awkwardly.

He refuses to discuss religion. "It's a purely personal thing and not something I would like to see in print." Long after the interview, he attempts to have publication of this article halted.

It is only when I ask Biggam about Scotland and his roots that he suddenly seems able to roll all the answers into one, resorting to the safety of talking in the third person. He describes himself as a passionate expatriate. "Deep down I think all Scotsmen are emotional and volatile. The dour Scotsman is just a figment of the imagination, it is quite the opposite really. They care passionately about life, but they have got to have 'hild' enough whisky before they show it."

WEEK ENDING Matthew Bond

Falling foul of a desire to increase Rover's returns

BET Gilroy has long been a familiar sight on the pages of the tabloid press. But when Britain's best known barmaid graduates to the front pages of the broadsheets, it is clear that something serious must be oop, sorry up.

According to Mrs Gilroy — perhaps better known by her maiden name of Lynch and more accurately as actress Julie Goodyear — what was up was the future of British broadcasting, which this weekend reputedly teeters on the edge of collapse following the enforced departure of David Plowright, chairman of Granada Television.

Given the relentless enthusiasm of the television industry for making a drama out of a crisis (*Brideshead Revisited* — you've read the stock exchange announcement, now watch the mini-series) it is difficult for outside observers to determine just how critical Mr Plowright's departure, after 30 years, really is.

Ms Goodyear was in no doubt, however, and made an impassioned plea for Mr Plowright's return. "David Plowright has Granada stamped through him like a stick of Blackpool rock," she said, showing a Bet-like ease with sharp one-liners.

Much has been made of the fact that Mr Plowright's hasty exit followed an altercation with the new chief executive of Granada Group, Gerry Robinson, who not only has the misfortune to be an accountant but arrived at Granada from Compass Group, a catering and private hospitals company. "I mean darling, he's all cling-film and bedpans. Not exactly Bafta award material, is it?" As for what her new boss must be stamped through with, Ms Goodyear, perhaps prudently, is not saying.

Personally, I think Mr Robinson just has a few first-night nerves. After all, he has been there only four months and probably still thinks that the main aim in commercial television is to make money. But we know better than that — don't we hives.

Not that we need to spend

too much time feeling sorry for Mr Plowright. By the end of the week he had written pledges of support from over 100 of Britain's top writers, directors and producers. Sounds like the beginning of a very promising consortium to me. How long before David Plowright Productions and a cast of thousands bring us *Granada Revisited* — *The Free Market Solution*?

Until this week, Britain's favourite barmaid can surely have been in no doubt as to what was stamped through Britain's favourite princess. The Princess of Wales just had to be British, from begin-



ning to end. Until this week... For after weeks of very publicly resisting temptation, she finally snapped. A gleaming new Mercedes convertible sports car now takes pride of place in the royal garage.

Some believe the controversial acquisition was made under orders from Buckingham Palace, in a desperate last attempt to bridge the huge popularity gap that exists between the princess and her sister-in-law. Others think it was probably the Duchess of York who encouraged her. But whatever the motivation, the princess's new car comes at a distinctly inopportune time for the British motor industry.

For when it comes to matters vehicular, things have

rarely been worse. Car sales last month were the lowest for ten years and are over 30 per cent down on the level of three years ago. As Ford announced plans to make over 2,100 workers redundant, it fell to Sir Hal Miller, of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders, to state the blindingly obvious. "A boost for car sales is still desperately needed."

Indeed it is. But what? The long-awaited Monopolies and Mergers Commission report failed to come with any answers. While it was packed full of splendid ideas for encouraging more motor dealers to offer more makes of car for sale, it failed to produce a single measure that might make more people actually buy them. In desperation, the report was finally reduced to recommending a change to driving on the right as a means of stimulating demand. Certainly that should do great things for waiting lists, but in hospitals rather than car showrooms.

One really radical solution emerged this week from the property sector, where surplus office space is to tenants what new cars are to the great driving public. So determined was the West End landlord to let its new building in St Martin's Lane that the company cut the asking rent by a third from £47.50 a sq ft to £31.50. It's the sort of price reduction that in earlier days would normally have been accompanied by a protesting developer-offering to lie down and cut his own throat as well.

In the mean, lean Nineties it's the sort of price reduction that gets your building let. It might just be the sort of price reduction that gets new cars sold again — with or without the Princess of Wales.

By coincidence, the building's new tenant is Carlton Television, one of the new breed of ITV companies and early favourite to win one of the new breed of Bafta award — the biggest single saving in fixed overheads. I wonder if Mr Plowright might present the prizes.

Lufthansa poised to cancel new aircraft

By Wolfgang Münchau

THE downturn in the world airline business has finally caught up with one of the industry's rock-solid operators. Deutsche Lufthansa, the German national airline,

Lufthansa confirmed yesterday that it might have to delay orders on 11 new Boeing 737 and Airbus 320 aircraft, due for delivery next year, as part of a cost-saving drive. The airline's management board is considering a series of measures, which could include further order cancellations.

A spokesman said that "restrictive staff measures" are also being looked at. It is widely speculated that this could include a freeze on hiring new staff or even redundancies.

Last year was one of the worst in the history of the airline, which gave a warning this week of a DM400 million loss for 1991, the first loss since 1973. Like other carriers, Lufthansa was hard hit by the Gulf war and the worldwide economic downturn.

In 1991, there was a 33 per cent expansion of its fleet, to a total of 225 aircraft, but the collapse in the second-hand aircraft market meant that plans to sell 14 used aircraft had to be shelved. The fact that used aircraft are difficult to re-sell is one of main reasons for the company's review of its orders.

Lufthansa's difficulties and the tightness of German public finances have again raised the issue of privatisation. The airline is listed on the German stock exchange, but the majority of the shares are held by the federal and regional states.

The official line from Lufthansa is that privatisation is a matter for the shareholders rather than the company itself.

The biggest obstacle to privatisation is the transfer of the company's pension fund — under which Lufthansa employees enjoy the same benefits as people working in the public sector — to a private-sector fund.

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TEMPUS

Wolseley taps in to French success

WITH the wave of cross-border takeovers over recent years, a number of venerable national and racial stereotypes are becoming difficult to sustain.

Popular British myth had it that French plumbing standards were not quite what they could be. No more. From today, not only will the company supplying many of the water pipes and U-bends of France be British-owned, but the purchaser, Wolseley, admits that standards of French plumbing may actually be higher than in the UK.

The Fr930.95 million purchase of the Brossette Group went down well in the City. Wolseley shares closing 1p up at 414p. Wolseley does not deny that it is paying a full price for the acquisition but believes that the opportunity to buy the company was too good to miss. Brossette, 95 per cent owned by the founding Brossette family, is the market leader in France with a 12 per cent national share and is well-placed to have made pre-tax profits of Fr101.4 million last year.

The multiple of 13.7 times historic earnings

looks pricey but Jeremy Lancaster, the chairman and managing director of Wolseley, is adamant that the deal will not dilute earnings.

Further ahead, Brossette will form the launch pad for further expansion east into Germany and south into Spain and Italy. Wolseley is already the biggest company of its kind in the world, dominating the UK and American markets. Now it looks as if it has the whole of western and, in due course eastern Europe in its sights.

However, the deal is also something of a leap in the dark. Wolseley is well aware of the cultural pitfalls of Anglo-French business partnerships, and with a largely non-Francophone board has its work cut out to achieve a successful integration.

The shares issued to finance the deal mean that earnings expectations for the current and next financial years are little changed at 25p and 29p respectively. The shares, on a 1993 multiple of 14.6 times, do not come cheap, but Wolseley has fully justified its premium rating.

Wiggins Group

IF ATTEMPTS to contact Wiggins Group are as difficult for customers as they were for Tempus yesterday, the housebuilder would be struggling without a recession.

Cynics might have questioned whose hand was on the pliers that smashed the company's telephone link on one of its most public days of the year, were it not for the fact that Wiggins always seemed approachable in the early days of the property collapse.

So serious has been the slump in property values that net assets have deteriorated to less than half the paid-up share capital, and shareholders are sum-

moned to an extraordinary meeting at the end of the month.

Operationally, the key measure taken so far is the switch of the group's prime activities from London's docklands to the East Midlands, where Stephen Hayman, the chairman, sees "significant indications of improvement in the demand for new houses".

Closing down the operations in the South-West cost more than £1 million and led to a doubling of the group loss for the six months to September 30, to £1.76 million. In the previous full year there was a loss of £2.49 million.

At 10p the shares are only for the very brave.

Market-makers unload to balance their books

MARKET-makers were busy selling shares as the two-week trading account closed, which does not bode well for Monday's new account.

Brokers say the market-makers have been selling stock to balance their books and minimise exposure to the market. This clearly had an impact on the market, with the FT-SE 100 index ending the session near the day's low, 17.1 down at 2,517.2. But turnover was boosted to almost 600 million shares as market-makers sorted out their positions.

There has been persistent concern in London during the past couple of weeks about a big technical correction on Wall Street after its record-breaking run. There has been little evidence of one so far, but with the Dow Jones index opening lower in early trading, traders in London were taking no chances.

This has been one trading account that fund managers and traders alike will be glad to see the back of, with sentiment weighed down heavily by gloomy political and economic news, the worries over Wall Street and a general absence of corporate activity. Bearing this in mind, the institutions have doggedly stuck to the sidelines, waiting for signs of an uptick on the economic front or a pick-up in corporate trading news.

Gilt closed with losses of almost 1p at the longer end, untested by the start of trading on Monday in a new 11.25 billion of Treasury 9 per cent 2012.

International companies were worried about renewed dollar weakness and there were falls for ICI, 20p to £12.53, Glaxo, 13p to 81p, and Smith-Kline Beecham, 8p to 53p.

Base, the drinks and hotel group, fell to 513p before closing 13p lower at 522p, after the company announced it had begun legal proceedings against Promus, the company that formerly managed the Holiday Inn hotel chain.



Base claims that it was misled by Promus when it agreed to pay \$2.23 billion for the hotels in 1990. Promus had been established to buy out other assets of Holiday Corporation, the original owner.

The shares closed 18p down at 254p. Allied-Lyons showed signs of bottoming out after this week's steep fall, the price easing just 3p to 619p. BZW has become the latest firm to

There was further heavy turnover in Rascal Electronics, with 35 million shares traded as the price firmed 1p to 51p. This has fuelled speculation that another bid may be on the way. County NatWest WoodMac, the broker, has done much of the buying. Claims that Williams Holdings may be unloading its stake after the failure of last year's bid seem wide of the mark. Williams would be unlikely to use County in preference to its own broker.

of the business. Elsewhere in the drinks sector, HP Bulmer continued to lose ground, and, despite the prospect of a European Commission increasing the tax on sales of

downgrade, cutting its pre-tax profit estimate for the current year by £25 million to £635 million and for next year from £680 million to £620 million. Once again the move is blamed on poor trad-

FTSE 100	2,517.2	FTSE 100	2,517.2
FTSE 100	2,517.2	FTSE 100	2,517.2
FTSE 100	2,517.2	FTSE 100	2,517.2
FTSE 100	2,517.2	FTSE 100	2,517.2
FTSE 100	2,517.2	FTSE 100	2,517.2

Capital Investment	100	Capital Investment	100
Capital Investment	100	Capital Investment	100
Capital Investment	100	Capital Investment	100
Capital Investment	100	Capital Investment	100
Capital Investment	100	Capital Investment	100

ing throughout January. Grand Metropolitan rallied 9p to 921p as recent speculation that the group is about to hit the acquisition trail began to fade. Earlier this week, there was talk of Grand Met was about to make an offer for Perrier or Pernod Ricard.

There were still worries for a number of big companies relating to proposed changes in accounting practices. BZW is about to publish a report outlining the depressing effects some of these changes, particularly the way they treat disposals and deferred taxation, may have on earnings. Those on the list include British Airways, off 9p at 221p, P&O, 8p at 421p, Fisons, steady at 379p, Ladbrokes, 1p down at 206p, and Cable and Wireless, steady at 580p. British Airways was further weakened by repeated reports of delays to its proposed merger with KLM, the Dutch airline.

Medeva, the pharmaceutical group, firmed another 1p to a new high of 293p. General American Shares A fell 10p to 514.20 as fund managers continued to express disappointment with Thursday's presentation arranged by Warburg Securities. It was hoped the group had something positive to say, especially regarding reform of its two-tier voting structure. The institutions left the meeting disappointed, with the group prepared to give little away.

Evite Save Discount extended recent losses with a fall of 17p to 57p as the profit downgrade continued. Already this week, it has been hit by a cut in profit estimates by James Capel. Charterhouse Tilney and BZW. Analysts say the group is coming under increasing pressure from the German discount food chains.

Wace, the pre-press specialist, remained out of favour with the price dropping another 14p to 105p.

MICHAEL CLARK

WALL STREET

New York — Blue chip shares moved higher and the broad market extended gains after bonds rallied. The Dow average was up 5 points in early trading at 3,261.

Tokyo — The Nikkei index was up 2.2 at 22,107.12.

Sydney — The all-ordinaries index was down 3.7 at 1,590.9.

Hong Kong — The Hang Seng index was up 39.28 at 4,711.37.

Frankfurt — The Dax index was up 4.99 at 1,685.52.

Company	Price	Change	Company	Price	Change
AMP	614	+6	Glaxo	81	+1
ARM	784	+1	ICI	20	+1
ASDA	181	+1	Imperial	10	+1
ASDA	181	+1	Imperial	10	+1
ASDA	181	+1	Imperial	10	+1
ASDA	181	+1	Imperial	10	+1
ASDA	181	+1	Imperial	10	+1

Company	Price	Change	Company	Price	Change
ABN LIFE ASSURANCE	110.00	+0.20	ABN LIFE ASSURANCE	110.00	+0.20
ABN LIFE ASSURANCE	110.00	+0.20	ABN LIFE ASSURANCE	110.00	+0.20
ABN LIFE ASSURANCE	110.00	+0.20	ABN LIFE ASSURANCE	110.00	+0.20
ABN LIFE ASSURANCE	110.00	+0.20	ABN LIFE ASSURANCE	110.00	+0.20
ABN LIFE ASSURANCE	110.00	+0.20	ABN LIFE ASSURANCE	110.00	+0.20

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● LETTERS 24

WEEKEND MONEY

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 8 1992

Edited by Lindsay Cook

Pre-Budget fever takes hold

Once again we are subject to a pre-Budget flood of mailings telling us to invest now before this never-to-be-repeated bargain is withdrawn by the wicked Chancellor. This year, the season is spiced up with pre-election fever. We now have two Chancellors to fear.

Business expansion schemes with guaranteed exits, single company personal equity plans, managed Peps, and all the other permutations of the tax-free plans are being given the hard sell. Some are moving further afield to whip up worries about inheritance tax. The prime minister has stated clearly that he wants to reduce the burden of this tax and it is widely expected that his Chancellor will lift substantially the threshold for the start of the 40 per cent tax.

However, scaremongers are trying to sell expensive insurance policies to cover inheritance tax bills. They argue that the spectre of a Labour government makes such an investment a good idea now before prices rise.

Some salesmen even suggest

that people will be leaving a debt behind for their children if they do not take out such cover.

A few offshore products are also being dusted down as a pre-election special. The salesmen encourage investors to transfer their savings beyond the jurisdiction of the British tax authorities for fear of higher rate taxes here, without explaining that the investors will probably still be liable to a tax bill if their affairs are scrutinised closely. The funds will also not be covered by the investor compensation scheme.

Sophisticated investors will be aware that this is an annual event and that the BES season would not be complete without a threat to their future. This year it is double-barrelled, the salesmen claim, as both Chancellors have the schemes on their hit lists. Others might be seduced by the promise of guaranteed returns. As



COMMENT

LINDSAY COOK
WEEKEND MONEY EDITOR

the prospectuses plop through the letter box in ever increasing numbers, a fair amount of scepticism is required and a brief jog of the memory. It is not long since asset-backed schemes to buy hotels and pubs, invest in fine wines and farmland were sold as safe investments.

Money poured in as BES companies promised that the Inland Revenue was going to subsidise all the wine a person could drink. Many investors have lived to rue the day they believed in the glossy photographs and the fine phrases and forgot to

question the details. Too many "risk-free" schemes have failed in the past, making the tax incentives expensive. Too many personal equity plans cost more in charges than investors get back in tax relief, unless they intend to hold the investments for a long time.

No investment in any type of scheme should be bought for the tax breaks alone. Nor should a rush to beat a deadline prevent careful reading of the prospectus and asking of questions of the purveyor of the scheme.

A good investment stands scrutiny and an honest salesman

will not mind finding out the answers. Of course, there is also always the possibility that yet another pre-Budget scare has no substance. This will, no doubt, grieve the salesmen as they count up their takings.

Charity breaks

As the fifth anniversary of the creation of the Give As You Earn scheme approaches, another attempt to breathe life into it is being attempted. So far, a derisory 143,237 people have signed up to benefit charities through their pay packets.

Next week, a campaign will be launched to encourage more people to give to charities in this way. It enables them to be generous with money that would otherwise have gone to the Inland Revenue. Givers pay only the net

amount after tax but the charities receive the gross amount.

Last year, £23.7 million was paid to 3,500 charities in this way by 2,557 employers. Unfortunately, there are many more workers who would like to give tax-effectively but cannot do so through their payroll because their employers do not want the extra administrative burden of providing it.

Give As You Earn campaigners are looking for a boost to the annual giving limit in the Budget. This is now £600 per employee. It has come a long way since being introduced by Nigel Lawson at only £10 a month.

The Budget could give the scheme an even bigger fillip by compelling employers to provide a scheme if they have more than 50 employees and they have requests from employees to do so.

All too often firms that are reluctant to start charitable schemes are willing to take any credit when their staff dig deep into their pockets to make it a success.

Regulation of the investment industry is being tightened but it is a slow process

Fraudsters still have a few tricks up their sleeves

By LINDSAY COOK, WEEKEND MONEY EDITOR

INVESTORS seeking reassurance that more than five years after the Financial Services Act became law, savings cannot be siphoned off into yachts, flashy cars or the high living of any fraudulent salesman, are in for a disappointment.

New turmoil on the investor protection front means another financial scandal could already be in the making. The next 18 months are critical.

Three of the self-regulatory organisations established by the Financial Services Act are likely to be replaced by a new body as yet without a name. This will regulate all the investment businesses which deal with the public, apart from stockbrokers and futures dealers, who will retain their own regulatory organisation, the Securities and Futures Authority. The transition period could allow fraudsters to escape detection.

The Financial Intermediaries Managers and Brokers Regulatory Association, which regulates 6,663 independent financial advisers, admits there are still problems. John Pinniger, FIMBRA spokesman, said: "I would not for one moment say that another big fraud could not happen again. People will become fraudsters for all sorts of reasons. It is not always possible to identify them immediately. John Redwood [corporate affairs minister] is trying to get us to look for the early warning indicators."

The Securities and Investments Board said it did not believe that there would be additional fraud because of the changes taking place. It did, however, accept that during the transition parts of the system could be run-down. "Regulators must be able to distinguish between reasonable cost-cutting measures and those that would damage investor protection," a spokeswoman said.

Without tip-offs, Fimbra may not identify fraudulent activity for at least three years under the current system. Regular compliance visits take place once a year for the larger firms handling investors' money and once every three years for others.

Dunsdale Securities managed to escape detection for more than two years after it came under the regulation of Fimbra by using two sets of books. Its collapse was brought about by two requests for large withdrawals. The demise of another large investment firm, whose principal is awaiting trial, is attributed to the vigilance of a journalist by Godfrey Jilings, the chief executive of Fimbra.

The association has revoked the licences of 594 brokers since April 1988 and 43 of its members are currently suspended and unable to carry out investment business. Because of the way the system works at present some members have resigned just ahead of expulsion and gone on to become the tied agents of insurance companies.

Fimbra says: "There is pressure in the UK and Europe to bring about the regulation of individuals and not businesses. Currently, if a person fouls up at one firm he can join a firm regulated by another body. This will be avoided by a single retail regulator."

Sir Kenneth Lucas is expected to finish his study of

to claims from investors. Some of these companies were stopped from trading in 1990 and so far investors in only a quarter of the firms have received any compensation.

Mildminster was suspended on June 28, 1989, and was declared in default in November 1989, but 25 of the 63 investors compensated did not get their money until the current financial year. JGM Financial Services went into liquidation on June 14, 1989, and was declared in default in January 1990. Thirty-six of the investors waited until the current year to collect more than £580,000. Levitt Group's clients have received nothing yet although it was declared in default more than a year ago.

The scheme has paid out £15.2 million since it started in August 1988. The Securities and Investments Board says it cannot calculate how much more is outstanding.

Many investors, however, fall outside the protection of the Act. A High Court ruling last year established that the scheme should cover investments made from December 1986. However, there is still discussion about whether

'There is pressure in the UK and Europe to bring about the regulation of individuals and not businesses'

the regulators in the next two weeks. This could lead to a changeover to a single retail body replacing Fimbra, the Investment Management Regulatory Organisation, the Life Assurance and Unit Trust Regulatory Organisation and the Insurance Brokers Registration Council. The earliest this could happen is April next year and that would require willingness on the part of all parties. Some regulatory organisations do not want to be replaced.

Sir Kenneth may also recommend that one investor arbitration body deal with all complaints.

Since last April, 24 firms have been declared in default by the investors' compensation scheme, opening the way

money invested before August 1988 will automatically be covered unless the investor has proof that it had not been fraudulently used by then.

Other investors are persuaded to put their money in diamonds, gold coins, stamps or other alternative investments, but find they are not covered when the investments fail to arrive or do not live up to the sales spiel.

Investors attracted by the tax breaks of enterprise zone schemes can be unprotected when these are arranged so each investor puts up money for a single property.

Those operating without authorisation and managers of insurance company funds are also outside the Financial Services Act. Insurance companies are under the jurisdic-

partial office housing a one-man band operation could be cause for concern.

People should avoid being pressured into putting all their money into one investment instead of spreading it over a range of safer and riskier investments. They should only invest if they understand what is going to happen to their money, and should not rush into things just because an adviser is encouraging them to sign up immediately, the booklet says.

SIB warns people to be wary if they hear nothing of their investments. Receiving a high return when everyone else is tightening their belts could mean an adviser is using new investors' money to pay old, which is illegal. Any suspicious and unjustifiable behaviour should be reported to the regulators.



Compensation on a sliding scale

TO date 2,439 people have received compensation from the Investors Compensation Scheme set up by the Securities and Investments Board. The most costly default was Dunsdale Securities, where 151 investors received £4.1 million last year. But because of the upper payment limit of £48,000 many investors in this and other schemes receive only a small proportion of their loss in compensation.

It pays out the first £30,000 of a legitimate claim in full and 90 per cent of the next £20,000. This has not been increased since the scheme started in 1988 and SIB has no plans to increase the ceiling in line with inflation.

The scheme only pays out if a firm is declared in default, which means it has had to have ceased trading.

The investment referee can pay out up to £100,000 and the arbitration scheme operated by the Chartered Institute of Arbitrators for Fimbra

has a £50,000 limit, as has the insurance ombudsman. If the ICS scheme had no ceiling it would have paid out an additional £3.8 million to investors, the Commons Select Committee on SIB was told. The first £25 million of compensation in a year is currently paid for by investment companies. Should the claims exceed this, an insurance policy would pay the rest. The insurance policy runs out next month and SIB has not been able to renegotiate cover at an acceptable premium.

The arbitration scheme offered by Fimbra deals with claims against companies that are still operating, as do the investment referee and insurance ombudsman. The Chartered Institute of Arbitrators has received 88 cases since the scheme was launched last year. The highest payout has been £29,000 to a woman who received bad advice.

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When the alarm bells should ring

By SARA MCCONNELL

SOME investors lose their money because they think they are putting it into an acceptably above board investment, unaware that it is being siphoned off for other, unconnected purposes. Others are tempted by the promise of high returns to put money into risky ventures, and end up with no return.

However, many pitfalls can be avoided by using some common sense, according to the Securities and Investments Board's booklet, "How to Spot the Investment Cowboys".

No one should consider putting money with a salesman who is not authorised or overseen by an authorised firm. Putting money with an

unauthorised firm means that investors are not eligible to claim under the industry's compensation scheme if the firm collapses and money disappears. People should check whether a salesman is authorised by checking his or her entry in the central register (telephone 071-929 3652) or by checking with the relevant regulator.

SIB warns people to be wary if they are offered an unusually high rate of return. Alarm bells should also start ringing if an adviser suggests putting some money into a special scheme run by him but cannot give details. Investors should resist pressure to cash in long-term policies such as life policies and give the money to the adviser to invest.

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Unitised life policies add hundreds to the cost of an early exit

Up goes the price of surrender

BY SARA MCCONNELL

SURRENDERING any endowment policy after only a couple of years is a surefire way of getting back less money than has been paid in premiums. However, people who cash in one of the new, unitised with-profits policies increasingly adopted as standard by life offices stand to lose hundreds of pounds more than with a conventional with-profits policy.

Research from the Securities and Investments Board indicates that up to a third of policyholders surrender their policies in the first two years. These figures have been disputed by several life offices but they concede that surrenders are increasing as the recession continues and people can no longer keep up payments. Norwich Union estimated that only half its contracts over 20 years reached maturity.

Several leading life offices, including Standard Life, Friends Provident and Scottish Amicable, are now offering 25-year unitised with-profits contracts as part of an endowment mortgage to all new borrowers. Other life offices, including Eagle Star, say they will be introducing similar plans this year. The companies also offer shorter-term, unitised with-profits policies.

Contributions to a unitised with-profits policy are invested in units, like a unit-linked policy, and the investment return on the policy is directly linked to the fortunes of the stock market. At the same time, the premiums will earn annual bonuses and a terminal bonus that cannot be taken away. Most companies are now paying an annual bonus of 8.5 per cent.

Unitised with-profits contracts, even more than their conventional counterparts, are structured to benefit policyholders who stay the course. Those who do not are hit hard by set-up costs in the early years. Only 60 to 70 per cent of any contribution is invested, with the rest deducted immediately for administration expenses and salesmen's commission.



The surrender value of a unitised with-profits policy is simply the value of the units with charges deducted. If stock market performance is bad, life offices can adjust the value of the units downwards, applying a market value adjustment. Bonuses are added but these do not amount to much because of the low level of contribution already invested. It is the upfront charges that pull the surrender value of a unitised with-profits policy down. Life company actuaries say.

Someone who cashes in a 25-year unitised with-profits endowment with Standard Life after two years' contributions of £30 a month will receive only £419 — £155 less than the £574 he or she would have received from a conventional with-profits policy. Both values are, of course, significantly less than the £720 paid in contributions.

A similar pattern emerges from Norwich Union, where the same policy surrendered after two years would yield £450 from a unitised with-profits policy, and £552 from a conventional with-profits one. At Friends Provident, the payout would be £405 on a unitised with-profits policy and £515 on the conventional.

The annual bonus paid by Friends Provident and Norwich Union is 8.5 per cent, while Standard Life's figures are calculated using a bonus of 9.5 per cent. The company said this should make, at most, a couple of pounds' difference to the surrender value. Surrender values have been worked out using current bonus rates and expenses and these could change.

After five years, unitised with-profits would still have a lower surrender value than conventional. Norwich Union's unitised payout on the same policy would be £1,536, while the conventional value would be £1,598. The premiums would have cost £1,800. Standard Life would pay £1,936 on a conventional policy and £1,743 on a unitised plan. Friends Provident would pay £1,710 on a conventional policy and £1,425 on its unitised contract.

John Hylands, Standard Life's assistant general manager (actuarial), said: "People would get better value if they surrendered a conventional 25-year policy after two years than if they surrendered a unitised policy. But the unit-

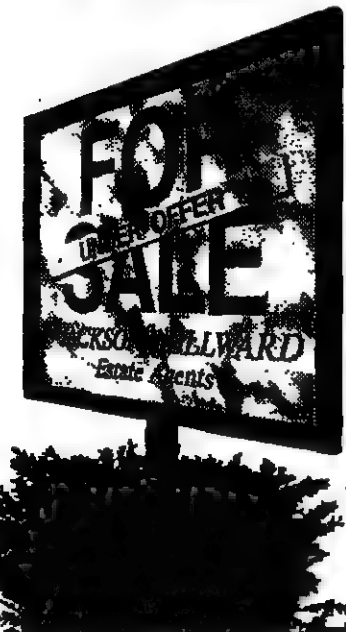
ised value is broadly of the right order because unitised contracts are better able to recognise expenses. In conventional contracts, expenses are a blunter instrument. The conventional surrender value is really too high after two years." The expenses of a conventional policy are spread more evenly over the life of the policy.

Kevin Fogg, product development department actuary at Norwich Union, said: "There is no actuarial reason why there should be such a wide differential, although you would expect the surrender value of the unitised contract to be slightly less because it is administratively more expensive, with switching and so on."

If a conventional policy is surrendered, the value is calculated using an "actuarial formula". Chris Baggeley, marketing manager, individual business, at Eagle Star, said: "This formula has been unaltered for 15 years. We look at the value of the basic sum assured according to age, then we place a value on the bonuses accrued to date. The value depends on age on entry and the term of the policy."

On the shorter-term policies, particularly 10-year contracts, unitised with-profits offer better surrender values than with-profits contracts. After two years, Standard Life would pay out £630 on a unitised policy and £560 on a conventional one. After five years, the amounts would be almost equal.

Life offices are, of course, keen to emphasise that nobody should surrender a policy early and that both types of policy would produce virtually equal values on maturity. However, because unitised with-profits policies have been running only a few years, there are no figures yet to bear this out.

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first home - there are many key decisions to make. For instance, finding the best way of repaying your mortgage: the best pension, PEP or endowment to link mortgage repayments to.

An endowment mortgage could be a sensible option for you, but which of the many life assurance companies do you select it from?

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Concern mounts over BES property buyback

BY SARA MCCONNELL

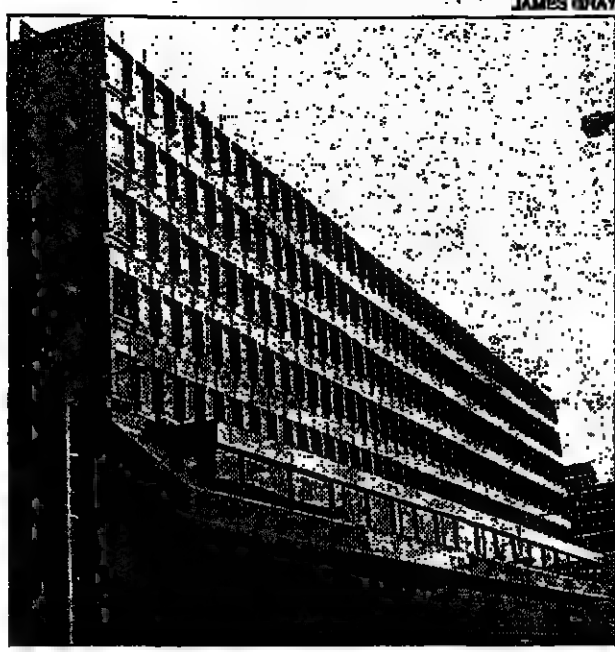
CONCERN is growing that housing associations which become involved in business expansion schemes (BESs) may not be able to meet commitments made to buy back properties from BES companies when these are wound up after five years.

BESs offering an assured exit are being heavily marketed, particularly as tax relief on them could be stopped in the Budget. These schemes claim to offer a guaranteed return through a contracted buyback of properties by a housing association or university. At the moment, higher rate taxpayers can get 40 per cent tax relief on up to £40,000 invested in any BES. The tax relief is allowed on the grounds that the schemes are risky, but assured-exit schemes are seen as less risky because of the guarantee.

The Housing Corporation, which regulates the activities of Britain's 2,300 registered housing associations, will emphasise in guidance notes to be issued next week that associations should not rely on being able to get a housing association grant to buy back properties.

The corporation said this week: "The guidance notes were first issued in 1988 but now there is specific concern that some housing associations may have been operating on the basis that they will automatically get a housing association grant to buy back properties to which they are committed under business expansion schemes. This is not the case and they will have to go through the normal procedures."

The associations have to tell the corporation of their involvement with a BES only if they have to seek a loan to buy property from a BES company. This means the corporation does not normally know which associations are committed, and would not have been able to advise them to steer clear if they were less financially



Guidance: Housing Corporation offices in London

sound. Many BES sponsors, including Johnson Fry, John Govett and Dartington and Co, the stockbroker, are marketing assured-exit BESs involving housing associations. The BES companies buy properties and rent them to tenants of housing associations for five years. The associations are bound to buy the properties back after five years at a price set when the scheme first buys the properties. This guarantees that investors will be able to sell their share in the company and make a profit. If the association cannot meet its obligations in five years, the BES company could be forced to sell on the open market, making investors wait longer for their money and giving them no guaranteed return.

John Spiers, editor of *BES Investment*, the specialist

magazine, said: "If investors are not being offered a bank guarantee with an assured-exit scheme, they need to look at the strength of the covenant with the association or other institution. The net asset value of the housing association is meaningless because they have low rents, low turnover and they can't usually sell properties in a hurry." The best measure of a housing association's strength is to assume 5 per cent of its properties become vacant every year, Mr Spiers said. If they sold these properties

then repaid any loans or grant, they would be financially healthy if the money raised from realising this proportion of properties exceeded their commitments under the BES.

Several schemes have allowed for this, Johnson

Fry's Ninth Super Growth Scheme, launched last week, has contracted five associations of which two would not be able to cover their commitments to the scheme after selling 5 per cent of their properties. The prospectus says both companies have agreed to set aside sums every year to build up a reserve.

John Govett's BES, Asset-builder 2, depends on the ability of the Shaftesbury housing association to finance the exit route for investors. The association has arranged a bank loan for £10 million and will set aside a further £3.4 million over the five years. The rate of interest has not yet been set.

Other schemes rely on the financial health of the association for their exit payments and investors should check the small print of the prospectuses.

If the housing association or other institution can afford to meet commitments, assured-exit schemes are still safer than assured-tenancy schemes, which carry no guarantee that investors will be able to sell and no fixed return. Assured-tenancy schemes have been in existence since 1988 but no investor has yet had the opportunity to test how easy it is to realise the property after five years as the schemes have not been in existence long enough.

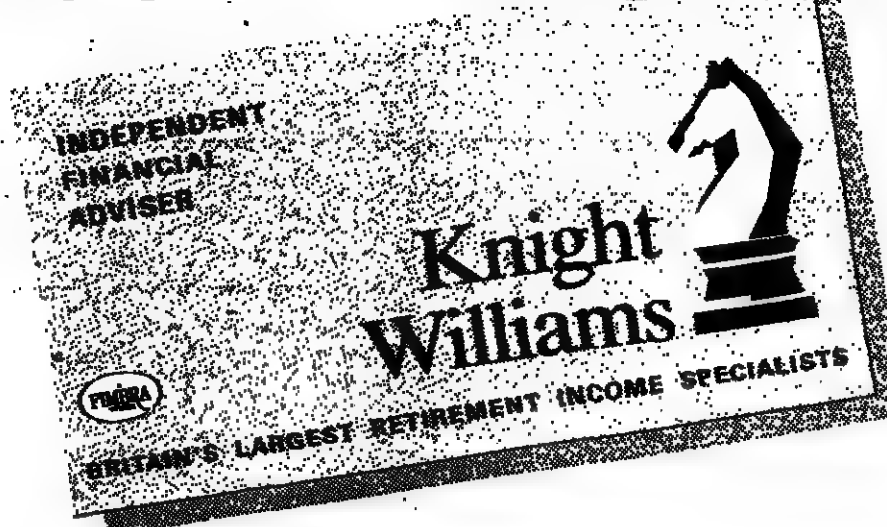
Assured-tenancy schemes use investors' money to buy property as cheaply as possible, let it to tenants on an assured-tenancy basis for five years or less, then sell the properties.

The value of the shares in the company in five years depends on the state of the residential property market. If it is as depressed as it is now, investors could find themselves with unsaleable property on their hands. Any changes to legislation that give tenants more security of tenure could reduce returns.

Comment, page 19

"The value of the shares in five years depends on the residential property market"

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Exotic risks: The Korean stock market is a volatile place which fell 45 per cent last year

Emerging market funds await the SIB's blessing

The sale of Korean and Mexican unit trusts may be permitted soon in Britain. Rupert Bruce considers the prospect

IN A month, British savers may be able to buy unit trusts investing in Korea, and a little later Mexican unit trusts could be on the market. However, these have little in common with relatively stable investments like the big UK unit trusts.

So-called emerging stock markets are volatile places, and Korea and Mexico are no exceptions. According to Morgan Stanley Capital International, the Mexican stock market rose 122 per cent in 1991, and the Korean fell 45 per cent.

Kenneth King, investment director at Kleinwort Benson Investment Management, said that when investing in emerging markets it was vital to be in at least ten to smooth out the ups and downs.

He said: "There is a familiar investment theory that says if you have 10 or 20 unrelated investments in 5 per cent chunks, you have a product that is not hugely volatile."

The Securities and Investments Board is awaiting replies to its proposals to allow Korean unit trusts, and if it does not receive any significant objections by the seventh of next month, will go ahead. It is also considering allowing Mexican unit trusts, but has not got as far as putting proposals to the SIB.

If the SIB does decide that Mexico or Korea are Recognised Investment Exchanges, unit trust managers will have the option of launching a unit trust, or increasing holdings in Mexico or Korea in existing unit trusts.

So far, only two unit trust managers have applied to the SIB to launch Korean unit trusts, and none has applied to launch Mexican ones. Baring Fund Managers plans to launch a unit trust as soon as it can. GT Unit Managers also says it is looking at the possibility "quite closely".

Both have offshore funds already invested in Korea, which, for the record, have performed badly along with the stock market. Microcap statistics show an investment of £1,000 in the Baring fund would have almost halved in the three years to the end of 1991, to only £523.90. The same sum invested in the GT fund at the beginning of last December would only be worth £853.80 by the beginning of January.

Both of these funds are based in Bermuda for tax reasons, and here lies the real motivation for wanting to launch UK unit trusts. Bermuda does not have a taxation treaty with Korea, while Britain does. So, if the Bermuda-based trusts want to invest directly in the Korean stock market, they have to pay Korean capital gains tax.

Kate Woollett, Baring Fund Managers' managing director, said: "We are not launching it necessarily as our view on the market. We have a fund in Bermuda that has adverse tax problems. That is what is driving our decision. It is not that we are saying now is the time to buy Korea."

Baring will give holders of its \$26.8 million offshore fund the chance to switch into the unit trust, which will also be marketed through financial advisers.

Most fund managers only plan to use the rules, if they come in, to increase the Korean or Mexican holdings of existing funds.

Two fixed-rates of just over 10 per cent are on offer from the Norwich & Peterborough building society, one of 10.25 per cent (APR 11.7 per cent) fixed for two years and one of 10.4 per cent (APR 11.7 per cent) fixed for three years.

Discounts for first-time buyers are on offer from the Abbey National and the Midland. First-time buyers borrowing less than £60,000 will pay 9.24 per cent until July 30, 1992, a discount of 1.75 per cent. The rate on loans between £60,000 and £100,000 is 8.8 per cent for first-time buyers, while those borrowing more than £100,000 will pay 8.65 per cent. The rates are higher for those borrowing more than 90 per cent of the value of the property.

The Midland has cut its standard mortgage rate from 11.45 per cent (APR 12.1 per cent) to 10.95 per cent (APR 11.5 per cent). First-time buyers will get a 1 per cent discount for the first 12 months.

Phone link to aid tax refund claims

BY LINDSAY COOK, MONEY EDITOR

A FREE telephone service begins tomorrow to help non-taxpayers obtain refunds of tax they should not have paid. Up to 8 million people have paid too much tax since last April, when the tax system for savings was changed.

This is the official estimate of how many non-taxpayers are still having tax deducted from their savings accounts when interest could be paid gross. Those who are earning £60 a week or less, including children, who have not registered for interest on accounts to be paid without deduction of tax can telephone 0800 66 0800 between 8 am and 8 pm seven days a week.

Local tax offices will be connected with callers. The Revenue estimates that when an application form is filled in, it may take only five days for the refund cheque to arrive with the saver. The telephone staff will also help non-taxpayers reclaim tax deducted from dividends or unit trust distributions.

To date, 13 million accounts belonging to about 7 million savers have been registered for gross payment of interest. Many other savers will be unaware that they can earn 33 per cent more immediately on their interest. A large number will have income levels close to their personal allowance and have been deterred from registering accounts in case their income rises in the last couple of months of the year, making them taxpayers.

Those whose income is just above their personal allowance cannot register for gross interest but can claim back tax deducted on any savings income below the threshold when they obtain a certificate of interest from their bank or building society if the tax involved is £50 or more. If it is less, they have to wait until April 5 to claim.



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Be an angel and put cash in the wings

Rodney Hobson reviews the pros and cons of the theatre as an investment

ISLINGTON is best known for The Angel on the Monopoly board. Now it is making a name for another speculative investment, again involving angels.

For the third time in 12 months, The King's Head Theatre is seeking financial backing to transfer a show to the West End. It is offering members of the public the chance to invest £500 each in *Spread a Little Happiness*, a musical revue that has enjoyed full houses during a six week run in Islington.

Investing in theatrical productions is, in the candid words of the prospectus, "extremely speculative and carries a high degree of risk".

Shares taken by theatre angels, as the backers are popularly known, are virtually unsaleable and if the play flops the whole investment is lost. However, even a modest run will ensure that the angels get part of their money back, and a highly successful

show can repay its backers within a month.

Spread a Little Happiness is based on the work of Vivian Ellis, a friend of Noel Coward and Ivor Novello and the last great survivor of the composers who made the British musical before the war. He co-wrote *Bless the Bride*, among other successes.

The King's Head, which seats about 120, is negotiating to transfer the revue in March to a West End theatre seating more than 650. With start-up costs of £120,000 and running costs of £22,000 a week, the theatre must average 40 per cent houses to avoid financial failure.

However, since all costs except royalties are fixed, the financial effect of playing to fuller houses is dramatic. Even a half full theatre will repay all costs within 16 weeks. Selling 90 per cent of tickets would mean a profit after only four weeks.

The King's Head, tucked

away behind a pub of the same name, has gained a reputation in theatrical circles as a trial ground for new productions, since it was founded in 1970 by Dan Crawford, still the venue's driving force.

Last April it raised backing to transfer *My Lovely Shynia Maidel*. This was not a financial success. However, later in

the year *Kverch*, an award winning play, recouped its costs and showed a small surplus despite going to the West End for only a fixed 11-week run.

The King's Head also sent *A Slice of Saturday Night* on tour with Gary Glitter and produced almost 30 per cent profit for its angels. Most have reinvested for a repeat

tour starring Alvin Stardust. Many angels are connected with theatreland.

Ivan Hale, associate producer at the King's Head, says: "We also get a cross section of the public. Some do it for philanthropic reasons, others purely as a bit of fun like the Grand National or the Derby. Many believe it is a reasonable investment and

think it is an exciting venture to be part of."

Frank Thornton, known on television as Captain Peacock in the comedy series *Grace and Favour*, is among five cast members who will transfer with the play. *Prospectus from the King's Head Theatre, 115 Upper Street, Islington, London N1 1QN.*



Funding performance: The musical *Spread a Little Happiness* needs backing to transfer to the West End

Counsellors overwhelmed by growing debt queues

NEXT week the Council of Mortgage Lenders will officially announce how many people lost their homes last year. Most of them will also have had other debts but many will not have been able to get any debt counselling (Lindsay Cook writes).

Money advice centres and Citizens Advice Bureaux are having to turn away people whose homes are at serious risk or who face court appearances for other debts. Waiting lists of a month or more for the first debt counselling appointment are not uncommon as money advice support units struggle to train people to do the often voluntary work.

In Liverpool, Barclays Bank is paying £50,000 a year to the city's money advice unit, almost the total running cost. The National Debt Helpline has just agreed to take over sponsorship of the London Money Support Unit for the next three years at a cost of £345,000. Citibank had undertaken the last three years' support.

However, such funding is difficult to come by for debt counsellors and training units. This week Edward Leigh, consumer affairs min-

ister, asked building societies to reconsider their refusal to give any financial support to the Money Advice Trust. This body was set up in 1990 to channel funding to debt advice agencies. Those societies that have contributed have preferred to make direct donations. These totalled £63,000 last year.

The Money Advice Trust wants £3 million and had

The National Consumer Council claims that only one debtor in seven can expect to get help from money advice centres and that centres in some areas can help only one in ten.

The council suggests a compulsory levy on lenders to fund such help. It argues that in 1989, local councils put up 50 per cent of the funding when only 16 per cent came from the finance industry.

The Liverpool money advice support unit was established in 1989 with the help of a three year grant from Barclays Bank. It was one of the first agencies set up by the Citizens Advice Bureau to offer a specialist money advice support service.

In addition to providing training for advice workers the unit also offers telephone back-up to workers in the area as they deal with clients, and monitors the impact of debt and credit practice on consumers. It organises regular forums for debt counsellors and invites speakers from organisations such as banks and utilities.

Kevin Wong, research manager at the unit, said that the demand from local CABs for training had grown tremendously in recent months.



Overstretched: Kevin Wong, of the Liverpool money advice unit, with Judith Riley, of the NACAB

hoped that societies would donate £10 for every £1 million they lend. This would cost large societies up to £50,000 a year. The trust has been pledged a total of £349,000 and staff to the value of £450,000 have been seconded.

How to dodge a false pot

BY CONAL GREGORY

ART and antique dealers and their trade associations are trying to emphasise the ways in which investors can purchase with confidence, following news that a court case is pending over allegedly fraudulent pottery.

The leading UK body for antique dealers, the British Antique Dealers' Association, founded in 1918, has established two mechanisms to help those with doubts over the authenticity of a piece.

BADA's assessment service will issue a written certificate with a full description of an object, which is invaluable for both insurance purposes and if a

sale is contemplated. The association convenes a panel of not less than three authorities in the field, not necessarily its members. The cost is £150 plus VAT and the commentary will include whether there have been additions, such as later handles or feet, or restoration, which can drastically affect the value.

Where there is "reasonable doubt" between dealers or between an investor and a dealer, BADA offers its Arbitration service, which is free.

The much larger and less exclusive London and Provincial Antique Dealers' Association (LAPADA) runs a conciliation service when the individual dealer member cannot resolve a dispute. LAPADA's code of practice requires dealers not only to state the full price but to give a full description, including the material used, the artist's name and if any major restoration has been effected.

By comparison, an auctioneer places the responsibility upon the bidder. Investors using an auction house can normally only secure redress if they can show the article was a fake or forgery.

Authorities at the national museums and galleries, as well as at regional ones, can offer individual opinions. The British Museum will see objects Monday to Friday from 2pm-4.30pm, such as antique maps and prints. The Victoria and Albert Museum offers a similar service

on Tuesday afternoons, covering all the applied arts (2.30pm-4.30pm) and the National Gallery similarly on Wednesday afternoons (2.30pm-5.00pm).

For certain materials, Oxford University's Research Laboratory for Archaeology and the History of Art will undertake investigations into the age of an object. Mr Rupert Housley uses radio carbon dating for wood but advises this method is not always safe for post 1650.

Professor Teddy Hall has pioneered work on porcelain and pottery using the thermoluminescence technique. For a fee of £130-£170, plus VAT, depending upon the complexity, the laboratory will use the most appropriate scientific measurement. Mrs Doreen Stoneham says 30-40 per cent of the ceramics submitted are identified as fake. The service is used by dealers, auctioneers and their clients.

Mr Michael Graham, a noted London English porcelain dealer, says, "It is easy to tell copies. The original materials used were distinctive." Mr Graham says he can identify copies of Chelsea, Derby and Worcester "instantly", as he can for the Regency period where the graining should be close. "After 1860, it is much more difficult." He is careful with early 19th century copies of 18th century Meissen and with redecorated Sevres.

MARKETS AROUND THE WORLD

6th FEBRUARY 1992

THE VIEW FROM SAVE & PROSPER

UK market shows modest rise... US consumer confidence at last begins to return... Tokyo market looking a little less volatile... Pacific region markets enjoy a strong surge... Germany still dominates European market sentiment.

UNITED KINGDOM

Market gaining confidence.

■ Share prices rose 3% in January and we believe a year-end target of 2,850 on the 'Footsie' is achievable, which would represent a rise of 11% above the market's current level.

■ Market is starting to anticipate a 0.5% interest rate cut close to the March 10th Budget. This should be made possible by sterling's recent strength against the Deutschmark.

■ Mortgages for first-time buyers are now at their cheapest for 13 years - this should stimulate the housing market and help kick-start the economy. But consumer confidence and demand still remain sluggish and the latest CBI survey was only faintly encouraging.

■ Patchy company results mean that dividends are likely to be held or even cut. We, however, believe that the market will soon begin looking forward to a resumption of year-on-year profits growth.

UNITED STATES

Market valuations looking overstretched.

■ The market has risen 12% since the last interest rate cut on 20th December 1991. However, though cash on deposit is unattractive at around 3%, US equity values are also now looking somewhat overstretched on a 17-times price/earnings multiple.

■ The recent G7 summit meeting stressed that economic recovery should be under way by mid-1992. This should help strengthen the dollar and also boost President Bush's re-election prospects.

■ Domestic output was up 0.3% in the 4th quarter of last year, an encouraging indication that the US has avoided a 'double dip' recession.

■ Consumer confidence has at last also shown signs of picking up in January, with improved hotel bookings and increased spending on leisure activities.

JAPAN

Increasing support at current levels.

■ The recent falls in share prices proved to be greater than we expected. Though unlikely, if the market were to dip much below its current level, it would pose severe problems for Japanese banks and also result in serious international repercussions.

■ There are, however, more signs of optimism in the market. Foreign investors remain active buyers and, more significantly, domestic institutions are returning to the market.

■ At 2%, inflation is well under control and the rate of economic growth in 1992 is expected to slow to 3%. The Bank of Japan has confirmed that more interest rate cuts are possible in order to stimulate the economy.

SOUTH EAST ASIA

Starting the year strongly.

■ Most Asian stock markets have risen strongly in January. In our view, there is little downside risk and we are confident that further gains will be made.

■ Investor confidence remains good in Hong Kong, helped by the improving political relations between the colony, China and Britain. The market should also be driven upwards by renewed interest in property development.

■ We also expect the Thai market to perform well, as it anticipates a recovery in company earnings and a better political environment.

EUROPE

Germany still holds the key.

■ The major German steelworkers' union has decided to settle for a 6.3% pay increase. This was at the top end of the Bundesbank's comfort range, but nevertheless encouraging.

■ This important wage settlement means that German interest rates are unlikely to rise further, though it's equally unlikely that they will fall until mid-1992. Any

later than that poses the risk of denting market confidence.

■ Amongst international bond markets, we favour European bonds most, because of the scope for interest rate cuts later this year.

■ For 1992, France is currently our favoured European market, as we expect it to be a strong beneficiary from the EC Single Market. The French economy is also bound to enjoy a welcome boost from the opening of EuroDisney near Paris in April.

CURRENT RECOMMENDED SAVE & PROSPER FUNDS

UNITED KINGDOM

Smaller Companies Income Fund and *UK Smaller Companies Growth Fund* for improving performance from smaller companies. *High Return Unit Trust* as a long-term core holding. Also consider our *Managed Portfolio PEP* for tax-free investment.

UNITED STATES

American Smaller Companies Fund for relative strength in a low growth, low inflation environment.

JAPAN

Japan Growth Fund for a broad spread of larger companies.

SOUTH EAST ASIA

Eastern Discovery Fund and *South East Asia Growth Fund* for the region's long-term growth potential.

EUROPE

European Growth Fund for its high weighting in large companies.

If you would like the latest fact sheet about Save & Prosper's current views on the world's major stock markets or if you require further information on any of the funds mentioned above, just ring the telephone number below, or talk to your financial adviser.

CALL FREE 0800 282 101

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THE INVESTMENT HOUSE

Clubs' relations cool after frozen cup-tie

England forward pair stand down from club games

BY DAVID HANDS, RUGBY CORRESPONDENT

AFTER the postponement of today's league fixtures, England's leading clubs concentrate on the postponed fourth round of the Pilkington Cup, and nowhere with greater intensity than at Sudbury, the home of Wasps.

The spotlight rests, once again, on Wasps' opponents, Harlequins—in part because they have been joined by yet another potential England player, to the frustration of his former club, and in part because the fortnight's delay in playing a match which Wasps believed to be playable on the original cup date has permitted the return of the suspended Troy Coker.

Harlequins believe themselves to be much misunderstood. If Simon Dear should choose to leave Rosslyn Park and contest a second-row place with Coker, Neil Edwards, Mark Russell and Steve Shortland, that, they say, is his decision.

Wasps are aching for the game and I hope the coaches of both clubs have told their players that discretion should be their watchword, regardless of the disagreement on a frozen January 25. These London derbies have occasionally got out of hand.

Harlequins are without Skinner, who favours a bruised shoulder, and Wasps are without Probyn. Both would probably have played had not England's game with France been just over the horizon.

On that topic David Sole, Scotland's captain, said yesterday. "While the international is very special and there is a lot more importance attached to them, I still enjoy playing club games because, in many respects from my point of view, there is less pressure on me." So Sole turns out for Edinburgh Academicals in their McEwan's league match at Jedburgh.

Harlequins are also without Bray, and field the young Challinor at stand-off half, but they still have a sparkling array of ten capped players, which should ensure the 1,000 tickets available at the Sudbury gate are snapped up.

There is no shortage of caps either at Northampton, where Bath, six-times cup winners in the last nine years, visit Northampton in the other first-division cup-tie.

"We want to emulate Bath's cup and league dominance, and we cannot even start doing that until we have

a trophy," John Oliver, the Northampton captain, said. "But you can measure our progress by the fact that we have ten players who have international or B-team experience, against Bath's 14."

Were Rosslyn Park to reach Monday's quarter-final draw, it would help assuage the hurt created by Dear's departure, but they will take nothing for granted against Thurrock, this season's giant-killers.

Thurrock's last cup victims were London Irish.

Richard Gache, the Thurrock captain, said: "We're not just going there to keep the score down."

In the West Country, Gloucester, unbeaten in the first division, play London Scottish, unbeaten in the second, while in the north, Waterloo, who entertain Leicester, hope to give Franz Ludeke, their South African No. 8, a good send-off.

Ludeke, a school teacher who has spent much time among the schools and junior clubs in the North West, returns home, but Waterloo hope to see him again, if not next season, the season after.

"He has been a great ambassador for his country," Keith Alderson, Waterloo's secretary, said.

Johnson points to Gosforth revival

BY DAVID HANDS

TIME was, David Johnson says, when he played rugby and worked. Now he works and plays rugby. The former-15 seems to suit him: he is the leading points scorer in the English first-class game this season and Newcastle Gosforth, the club for whom he plays stand-off half, are advancing to their status of 15 years ago.

Johnson links both eras. He made his debut for Gosforth as a 15-year-old schoolboy, alongside Malcolm Young, England's scrum half between 1977 and 1979. He played for the North with Beaumont, Neary, Smith and Utkley. He might have won a cap in the early 1980s, but for injury. Now, aged 36, he is helping his club in their belated chase for promotion to the first division.

Before today's Pilkington Cup tie at Manchester, Johnson had kicked 323 points this season, including 94 conversions. A personal aim would be to pass his record of 382 points in a season, further down the track is Young's Gosforth club record of 455.

"The prime thing is the club," Johnson said. "We were not dogs once but because of local financial difficulties, a failure to look forward, we topped, though never as far as some people think. We have turned it round with a new facility, a new administration, cash, and it's come together."

"I've been kicking a rugby ball for 20 years now. I don't practice because I have never had to—nine times out of ten I know why I miss kicks. If you strike the ball properly, it will go through, and when the team is playing well the posts seem very wide."

Johnson's relaxed approach must be of benefit to a developing side. He has come to terms with life's ups and downs: success with Northumberland and the North led to selection for an England B cap in 1981 but injury robbed him of a game against Ireland. He was picked to lead North America with the full England side in 1982 but wrecked his knee in a county cup final and withdrew.

"That put me back two years at the age of 27 but I was able to come back and



Back in the groove: Johnson relishes Newcastle Gosforth's return to form

reach a level of performance that got me a B cap against Italy in 1985. I always felt that would be the peak for me and I was delighted to have done it."

Just over three years ago he joined the construction company for whom he is now marketing and sales director. Laying down the base for a career took him away from Gosforth for two years to Northern.

Meanwhile Gosforth moved from the Great North Road to Brunton

Park, became Newcastle Gosforth and acquired Mike Mahoney, their coach during the late 1970s and early 1980s, as director of rugby. "Because of Mike a similar theme runs through the club as it did in the mid-70s when Gosforth won the cup twice," Johnson said.

"We win ball, we knock it down the other end, we put pressure on and squeeze, we take our opportunities. We use our strengths."

Today Manchester will feel the squeeze.

It seems unlikely that Leeds RUFC could become more than a club in name only before the 1993-4 season, though if plans were approved and Chandos Park and Kirkstall sold swiftly, work could start this year.

Nigel Melville, the former England captain, has been included in Yorkshire's squad for the ADT county championship semi-final against Cornwall in Redruth on March 21. Melville, Oley's scrum half, last played for the county in 1985.

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Leeds' foes may be united next time

BY MICHAEL STEVENSON

THE meeting was a surprise. Leeds' opponents, Leeds RUFC, were in the third division of the Courage Clubs Championship could be the last at that venue between the Yorkshire clubs if plans for a merger bear fruit during the summer.

Representatives of the clubs formed a new club, known simply as Leeds RUFC, last June and last month an outline planning application was lodged for a clubhouse and

three pitches on a new site to the northeast of the city. By the time the Leeds RUFC is formed, Leeds RUFC will be a new club, known simply as Leeds RUFC, last June and last month an outline planning application was lodged for a clubhouse and

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Pilkington Cup

Gloucester v L Scottish
Gloucester's international representatives—Smith, Jones and Castle from Scotland—bring them to full strength against a Scottish side, including Cronin at lock, in three previous cup meetings. Gloucester have never won, but should repair that omission.

Manchester v Newcastle G
Manchester will miss Kelly, their injured captain and bring Beasley and Dods to their second row for the defence of the only perfect cup record—played three, won three, all this season. Newcastle, though, have never won, but should repair that omission.

Northampton v Bath
The postponement has allowed Bath to recover fitness and to play a full-strength Northampton team. Bath, too, are at strength with nine internationals and have a league win over Northampton this season to sustain them, though they have never met in the cup.

Rosslyn Park v Thurrock
Rosslyn Park have a holder available at stand-off for the first time this season, Fowler and

Heineken League

Llanelli v Pontypridd
Phil Davies has recovered from a dislocated elbow and returns at lock for Llanelli, who play Ospreys at No. 8. Pontypridd hope to avoid a repeat of the early-season league match, when they slipped from leading 16-3, to a 15-15 draw.

Neath v Maesteg
Neath move Thurrock to stand-off and play Bowling at full back in an attempt to get their share of points back on the rails. If they do not do so against Maesteg, bottom of the table, their difficulties will be underlined.

Newport v Bridgend
Newport return refreshed from a break in the Canaries and at strong odds to get their share of points back on the rails. If they do not do so against Maesteg, bottom of the table, their difficulties will be underlined.

Pontypridd v Newbridge
Pontypridd, overtaken at the top by Swansea in midweek, are without the suspended Cynwalld Jones. Newbridge have not beaten their Gwent neighbours for nine years and include in their squad a first-time try-scoring winger in the cup with against Maesteg.

Wales v Harlequins

Wales play Dunster at tight-head prop in place of Probyn for the third cup meeting between the clubs. Harlequins won the first two. The fortnight's delay has allowed Coker to complete a suspension and he plays lock for Harlequins, who replace the injured Skinner with Russell.

Waterloo v Leicester
Franz Ludeke plays his last game at No. 8 for Waterloo before returning to Transvaal, and Warrisley retains his place on the wing. The Underwood brothers appear together on Leicester's second row for the first time this season and Murphy plays flanker instead of the injured Back.

FOOTBALL

3.0 unless stated

Barclays League

First division

Chelsea v Crystal Palace
Everton v Liverpool (all tickets)
Coventry v QPR

Second division

Barnley v Cambridge
Barnley v Sunderland (all tickets)
Charlton v Southend
Derby v Millwall
Grimsby v Blackpool
Ipswich v Portsmouth
Leicester v Oxford
Newcastle v Bristol C
Preston v Middlesbrough
Sheff Wed v Brighton
Tottenham v Wolves
Watford v Plymouth

Third division

Birmingham v West Bromwich
Bolton v Chester
Bristol v Southampton
Bristol v Walsley
Derby v Millwall
Exeter v Wigan
Hull City v Peterborough
Luton v Watford
Preston v Fulham
Reading v Shrewsbury
Swansea v Torquay

Fourth division

Aldershot v Walsley
Barnet v Scarborough
Barnley v Lincoln
Doncaster v Cardiff
Hull City v Rochdale
Hull City v Chesterfield
Mansfield v Southport
Northampton v Gillingham
Preston v York
York v Rotherham

GM Vauxhall Conference

Gateshead v Cheltenham (2.0)
Kettering v Barrow
Macclesfield v Bath
Merthyr v Rotherham
Preston v Walsley
Telford v Walsley
Widnes v Walsley

B and Q Scottish League

Aberdeen v Hibernian
Colt v Arbroath
Dundee v Dundee Utd
Motherwell v Dundee Utd
St Johnstone v Falkirk
St Mirren v Rangers

First division

Ayr v Meadowbank
Dundee v Kilmarnock
Hamilton v Clydebank
Partick v Montrose
Rath v Morton
Stirling v Forth

Second division

Alloa v Brechin
Arbroath v Clyde
Dumfries v Stranraer
Dumfries v Stranraer
Dumfries v Stranraer

Third division

Alloa v Brechin
Arbroath v Clyde
Dumfries v Stranraer
Dumfries v Stranraer
Dumfries v Stranraer

Fourth division

Alloa v Brechin
Arbroath v Clyde
Dumfries v Stranraer
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Partick v Montrose
Rath v Morton
Stirling v Forth

Second division

Alloa v Brechin
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Dumfries v Stranraer
Dumfries v Stranraer
Dumfries v Stranraer

Third division

Alloa v Brechin
Arbroath v Clyde
Dumfries v Stranraer
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Fourth division

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B and Q Scottish League

Aberdeen v Hibernian
Colt v Arbroath
Dundee v Dundee Utd
Motherwell v Dundee Utd
St Johnstone v Falkirk
St Mirren v Rangers

First division

Ayr v Meadowbank
Dundee v Kilmarnock
Hamilton v Clydebank
Partick v Montrose
Rath v Morton
Stirling v Forth

FOOTBALL

3.0 unless stated

Barclays League

First division

Chelsea v Crystal Palace
Everton v Liverpool (all tickets)
Coventry v QPR

Second division

Barnley v Cambridge
Barnley v Sunderland (all tickets)
Charlton v Southend
Derby v Millwall
Grimsby v Blackpool
Ipswich v Portsmouth
Leicester v Oxford
Newcastle v Bristol C
Preston v Middlesbrough
Sheff Wed v Brighton
Tottenham v Wolves
Watford v Plymouth

Third division

Birmingham v West Bromwich
Bolton v Chester
Bristol v Southampton
Bristol v Walsley
Derby v Millwall
Exeter v Wigan
Hull City v Peterborough
Luton v Watford
Preston v Fulham
Reading v Shrewsbury
Swansea v Torquay

Fourth division

Aldershot v Walsley
Barnet v Scarborough
Barnley v Lincoln
Doncaster v Cardiff
Hull City v Rochdale
Hull City v Chesterfield
Mansfield v Southport
Northampton v Gillingham
Preston v York
York v Rotherham

GM Vauxhall Conference

Gateshead v Cheltenham (2.0)
Kettering v Barrow
Macclesfield v Bath
Merthyr v Rotherham
Preston v Walsley
Telford v Walsley
Widnes v Walsley

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David Miller, chief sports correspondent, argues that the Winter Olympics will never be the same again

Albertville serves up a taste of Games to come

It is going to take some remarkable performances by exceptional competitors, such as Heinzer, on the downhill, Niemenen, off the ski jumps, or Isabelle and Paul Duchesnay, in the ice dancing, to bind as a coherent unit the XVI Winter Olympic Games that open today at Albertville, one of 13 competitive sites. Certainly, the French organisation is unlikely to bind the event and, in prospect, it is only television that will give the Games a collective identity.

Therein lies the danger and, possibly, a foretaste of the future. If the Games of Albertville, spread over 600 square miles, should prove to be successful — in spite of handicaps, natural and human, without parallel — there will be every reason in future for accepting a Games staged at multiple towns and villages.

In other words, regional Games, television orientated, rather than an event traditionally hosted by a single city. In February 1992, Albertville is no more than close to where the new TGV conveniently halts at Moutiers. It

is almost the only convenient thing about these Games.

After the decision of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to award the 1980 Winter Games to the cramped and incompetent upstate New York winter resort of Lake Placid, there was the bold and satisfactory venture into new territory at Sarajevo — a facility now sadly in decline, in common with the country — and then the first big-city Winter Games at Calgary.

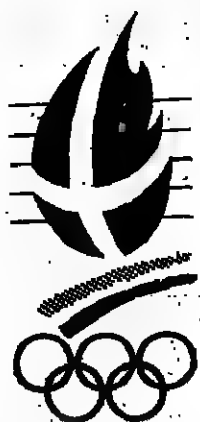
In 1994, tiny Lillehammer in Norway, a picturesque throwback to earlier times, threatens to be as inconvenient to sponsors and other ticket-holders, and to the media, as Albertville. Next, in 1998, comes the almost-big city of Nagano in western Japan.

What Albertville is likely to do is give substance to the suggestion this week by Juan Antonio Samaranch, the president of the IOC, that future Games can embrace two nations, providing an alternative to the few leading cities with facilities such as Salt Lake, Lausanne/Crans combine with Geneva/Chamonix; Gar-

misch with Innsbruck; Finland, which has no mountains, with Östersund in Sweden; and so on.

That, at least for the Winter Games, can mean the beginning of the end of the Olympic ethic, that special chemistry of taking part, the sense of being involved in something unique, as demonstrated so eloquently at Calgary by Judd Bankert, the first Olympic competitor from Guam, at the back of the field in Nordic skiing. The fulfilment of Samaranch's prediction will mean a simultaneous but separated gathering of world championships, linked only by television. I shall be glad to be retired, happy to have experienced what seem likely to be the last of the conventional Winter Games before they were compromised by their own success.

It is not only the disparate nature of the Albertville Games that will make them different. These are the first to experience the demise of the two great national powers of winter sports, the Soviet Union and German Democratic Republic, broken by the collapse of communism.



While the two totalitarian states were understandably strengthened by recourse to drug-enhancement, their formidable achievements were primarily the reward of national fanaticism, of a socio-political incentive that raised sport to previously unattained levels. Never again, however, will coaches have such a compulsory hold on their charges.

At Calgary, the Soviets and East Germans finished first and second in the medals table with 20 of the 46 golds between them. Now, the prediction must be that the re-formed United Team and the combined Germany — in which the western partner provides two-thirds of the team and the eastern contingent has been to a degree willingly corrupted by candy instead of testosterone — will fight out first place ahead of the United States.

Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia are back after 56 years and Croatia and Slovenia here for the first time. These are innovative Games in many ways.

So who are the stars who can rise above the anguished screams of those immovably stuck in traffic jams? The surest hero, I would say, must be Alberto Tomba, surprising victor in Calgary, whose only failure then was to ask for a date with Katarina Witt. The German lady turned him down but no one seems likely to resist him on the slope this time.

His victory in the Laubhorn slalom at Wengen was his fifth in

eight World Cup races this season, and the teeming horde of Italian supporters will be pouring over the passes these next few days to augment the chaos.

Franz Heinzer, of Switzerland, is favourite for the men's downhill but the reports yesterday, after the first practice session, suggest that the French, such as Piccard and Alphand, may have something to say on the new Belvedere course.

Then there is the local heroine, the adopted child from Reunion Island, Surya Bonaly. Her jumps are phenomenal, her style less impressive, but she is going to pack the figure skating stadium in Albertville.

There is also Dan Jansen, the youngster whose sister died the morning of the 500 metres speed skating in Calgary. Jansen fell twice before and after returning to Milwaukee for her funeral. He is back now as the favourite.

Toni Nieminen could become the youngest gold medal winner, at 16, in the history of the Winter Games, and is the arch exponent of the new V-style of ski jumping.

I, for one, am quietly celebrating the absence of the grounded eagle from Calgary, so that we can concentrate on achievement instead of farce.

Petra Kronberger, the exceptional Austrian skier who last year won gold medals in all five World Cup events, should give her country some much-needed joy at Meribel — the village that is the site of the ice hockey and where, today, half of the 15,000 spectators grinding their way up the hill in compulsory bus transport for the opening match between France and Canada may well arrive too late for half of it.

Britain, for once in a while, can legitimately look forward to one or two medals. The exciting Will O'Reilly is favourite in the short-track speed skating, one of the Games' most dramatic events. Mark Tait and his men might take two medals on the bobsleigh run, while Jilly Curry is optimistic about her chances in the new freestyle skiing event. The veteran Davina Galica, is making a comeback at 47 in the unofficial speed skating.

Tout sees glint of gold at the end of the ice tunnel

By CHRIS MOORE

IT IS little wonder that bobsleighbing has been described as the ultimate sporting madness — a heater-skater chase for the gold medal down a mile-long tunnel of ice without brakes.

Wilson Smith, the eccentric Englishman accredited with inventing the sport in St Moritz in 1899, soon found the need to attach a rake to the back of his prototype sled.

Bobsleighbing has been an Olympic event since the inaugural Winter Games at Chamonix in 1924, where the British quartet, driven by Ralph Broome, won the silver medal.

Twelve years later, in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Frederic McEvoy won the four-man bronze. But it was not until 1964 that Britain struck gold for the only time in Olympic competition as Tony Nash and his brakeman, Robin Dixon, took the two-man title in Innsbruck.

A year later the same pair won the world championship in St Moritz but that was the extent of British success. For the last 27 years, no British crew has finished in the top three in Olympic, world or European competition.

It is against that background that Mark Tout, Nick Phipps and Sean Olsson, the three drivers in the British team sponsored by Stella Artois, mount their challenge at La Plagne next week.

Tout's impressive showing in the World Cup this season — he is third in the two-man and second in the four-man — earned him pre-selection to drive the Great Britain I bobs in both Olympic events. Phipps, at 39 the veteran of

the 12-man team, and the fast-emerging Olsson, aged 24 and twice a winner on the European junior circuit this season, will race off for the other spot.

Given his form and achievements this season, which includes sixth place in last week's two-man race at the European championships in Königssee, Tout and his crew of Paul Field, George Farrell and Lenny Paul represent one of Britain's best hopes for a medal at the Olympics.

"There is no doubt in my mind that if we get our act together, particularly in the four-man event, we will be there or thereabouts," Tout, aged 31 and an army corporal in the 2nd Royal Tank Regiment, said.

Scar tissue from his temple to above the right ear remains a visible legacy of a horrific 85mph crash at Lake Placid five years ago, which almost cost him his life. "The fear factor is always there, but it's not something you think about," he said. "You only



Tout: impressive

have to look in a guy's eyes at the top of the track after you've crashed, and you know whether he wants to go down again."

As always, the Swiss and Germans, primarily in the shape of Gustav Weder and Wolfgang Hoppe, are favourites for the gold medals.

Hoppe, aged 34, is the most successful bobsleer still competing, with 24 medals in Olympic, world and European competition, including 11 golds, nine silver and four bronze. Only Wolfgang Zimmerer and Erich Schärer, with a total of 27 each, have won more than the world four-man champion from Oberhof, who was the double Olympic champion at Sarajevo in 1984.

His incentive on the new 1,500 metre track at La Plagne will be to equal Meinhard Nehmer as the only driver to win three Olympic golds.

Weder, aged 30, began bobsleing as a brakeman in 1984, four years after Tout. But he won the world two-man title at Cortina in 1989, and the following year became the first Swiss driver since Fritz Feierabend in 1947 to pull off the world double at the centenary championships in St Moritz.

"They must still be the two the rest have to beat," Horst Hoernlein, the British coach who, before unification, was East Germany's head coach for 17 years, said.

The two-man event will be run next weekend, February 15 and 16, with the four-man competition on February 21 and 22. There are two runs on each day on the track, which has 19 curves, 11 of which are right-handers.



Working out: Conway in training at the ice rink in Albertville yesterday

France's hopes resting with the Duchesnays

By JOHN HENNESSY

PATRIOTIC fervour will reach fever pitch in the Olympic ice rink at Albertville next week as the world ice dance champions, Isabelle and Paul Duchesnay, seek to give France their first gold medal for 60 years.

A groin injury to Paul Duchesnay caused him and his sister to withdraw from the European championships in Lausanne last month and, except for a trial run in a gala, their free programme is an unknown quantity.

Known to be based on the musical *West Side Story*, and choreographed by Christopher Dean, now Isabelle's husband, it should be a guarantee of exceptional quality.

There seems to be only two challengers to the Duchesnays, and French hopes. Both are from Moscow: Marina Klimova and Maia Usvova, partnered by their respective husbands, Sergei Ponomarenko and Alexander Zhulin.

Their performances in Lausanne spell danger. Klimova and Ponomarenko were twice world champions before the French siblings, inspired by Dean, dislodged them last year.

Kurt Browning, three times in successive seasons world champion for Canada, is the favourite for the men's title on the strength of that achievement alone, since Ilie has been seen of him this season because of injuries.

That would normally hang a big question mark over a skater but much the same situation obtained last year and he came through when it mattered.

Viktor Petrenko, second in the world last year, seems to have gone off the boil, finishing third in the CIS championship and deprived of his European title by Petr Barna.

of Czechoslovakia, in Lausanne. Barna can match Browning's quadruple toe loop but not his triple axel, which is now almost a compulsory requirement for men. The women's event is likely to be enlivened by the thrust for revenge on the part of the dynamic little Japanese, Midori Ito. World champion in 1989, she finished only fourth last year after a series of escapades.

Ito, aged 22, collided heavily with another skater in warm-up, fell out of the ice altogether in competition, and failed spectacularly with a triple axel — three-and-a-half revolutions in the air and the jump she has pioneered among women.

She is back to her true form this year and aching to square things with the new champion, Kristi Yamaguchi, not another Japanese but a fourth-generation American.

The two could hardly be more different. Ito, a muscular powerhouse, Yamaguchi, aged 20, an elfin figure with feathery technique and lightness of touch. It should be quite a battle.

The pairs championship, the weakest in numbers and in competitive bite, seems likely to perpetuate the domination of the former Soviet Union, and now CIS, through Natalya Mishchenko and Artur Dmitriyev, from Tamara Moskvina's pairs academy in St Petersburg.

Steven Cousins and Joanne Conway, her poor form in Lausanne notwithstanding, offer the best prospects for Britain, though a place in the first ten, rather than the first three, may be the sum of their ambitions.

The figure skating opens with the pre-original programme tomorrow.

GUIDE TO THE EVENTS AND VENUES AT THE WINTER OLYMPIC GAMES

All times GMT

Today

15.00: Opening ceremony.
12.15, 16.15 and 20.15: Ice hockey: Pool B: France v Canada, Czechoslovakia v Norway, CIS v Switzerland.

Tomorrow

09.00: Cross country, women's 15km.
09.05: Luge, men's singles.
09.10: Freestyle skiing, men's and women's aerials.
11.15: Alpine skiing, men's downhill.
12.30: Ski jumping, 90m.
15.00: Speed skating, women's 1,000m.
18.30: Figure skating, pairs original.
12.15, 16.15 and 20.15: Ice hockey: Pool A: Sweden v Poland, Finland v Germany, United States v Italy.

February 10

09.00: Cross country, men's 30km.
09.05: Luge, men's singles.
09.10: Alpine skiing, men's combined downhill.
13.00: Freestyle skiing, men's and women's aerials.
14.00: Speed skating, women's 500m.
12.15, 16.15 and 20.15: Ice hockey: Pool B: CIS v Norway, France v Czechoslovakia, Canada v Switzerland.

February 11

09.00: Luge, women's singles.
09.05 and 13.00: Alpine skiing, men's combined slalom.
09.30: Nordic combined 90m ski jump.
13.00: Bobsleigh, women's 7.5m.
18.30: Figure skating, pairs free programme.
12.15, 16.15 and 20.15: Ice hockey: Pool A: United States v Germany, Sweden v Italy.

February 12

09.30: Bobsleigh, men's 10km.
09.00: Luge, women's singles.
10.00: Freestyle skiing, moguls heats.
11.15: Alpine skiing, women's combined downhill.
13.00: Nordic combined 15km.
15.00: Speed skating, women's 1,500m.
12.15, 16.15 and 20.15: Ice hockey: Pool B: Canada v Norway, France v Switzerland, CIS v Czechoslovakia.

February 13

09.00: Cross country, men's 10km.
09.05 and 13.00: Alpine skiing, women's

men's combined slalom.
10.30: Freestyle skiing, moguls finals.
12.00: Cross country, women's 5km.
14.05: Speed skating, men's 5,000m.
18.30: Figure skating, men's original.
12.15, 16.15 and 20.15: Ice hockey: Pool A: Italy v Poland, United States v Finland, Germany v Sweden.

February 14

09.00: Bobsleigh, women's 3 x 7.5m.
09.05: Luge, men's doubles.
09.10: Speed skating, men's 1,000m.
12.30: Ski jumping, 120m team.
15.00: Speed skating, women's 1,000m.
18.30: Ice dancing, compulsory.
12.15, 16.15 and 20.15: Ice hockey: Pool B: France v CIS, Switzerland v Norway, Canada v Czechoslovakia.

February 15

09.00: Bobsleigh, two-man.
09.05: Freestyle skiing, aerials heats.
09.10: Cross country, men's 15km.
11.15: Alpine skiing, women's downhill.
12.00: Cross country, women's 10km.
13.30: Speed skating, men's 500m.
18.30: Figure skating, men's free programme.
12.15 and 20.15: Ice hockey: Pool A: Sweden v Finland, United States v Poland.

February 16

09.00: Bobsleigh, two-man.
09.05: Bobsleigh, men's 4 x 7.5m.
11.15: Alpine skiing, men's super giant slalom.
12.30: Ski jumping, 120m.
15.00: Figure skating, men's free programme.
12.00: Nordic combined, 90m ski jump team.
12.15, 16.15 and 20.15: Ice hockey: Pool B: France v Norway, Czechoslovakia v Switzerland, CIS v Canada.

February 17

09.00: Cross country, women's 4 x 5km.
09.05: Curling.
11.15: Alpine skiing, women's super giant slalom.
12.00: Nordic combined, 90m ski jump team.
15.00: Speed skating, women's 5,000m.
18.30: Ice dancing, free programme.
12.15 and 20.15: Ice hockey: Pool B: France v Norway, Czechoslovakia v Switzerland, CIS v Sweden.

February 18

09.30: Cross country, men's 4 x 10km.
09.00 and 13.00: Alpine skiing, men's giant slalom.
10.45: Speed skating.
11.00 and 17.00: Curling.
13.30: Nordic combined 3 x 10km.
15.00: Speed skating, men's 1,000m.
17.30: Short track speed skating.
12.15, 16.15 and 20.15: Ice hockey: ranking game, two quarter-finals.

February 19

09.00 and 13.00: Alpine skiing, women's giant slalom.
10.45: Speed skating.
11.00 and 17.00: Curling.
13.00: Bobsleigh, women's 15km.
18.30: Figure skating, women's original.
12.15, 16.15 and 20.15: Ice hockey: ranking game, two quarter-finals.

February 20

07.00 and 17.00: Curling.
09.00: Bobsleigh, men's 20km.
09.00 and 13.00: Alpine skiing, women's slalom.
10.45: Speed skating.
11.00 and 17.00: Curling.
13.00: Figure skating, women's free programme.
12.15, 16.15 and 20.15: Ice hockey: three ranking games.

February 21

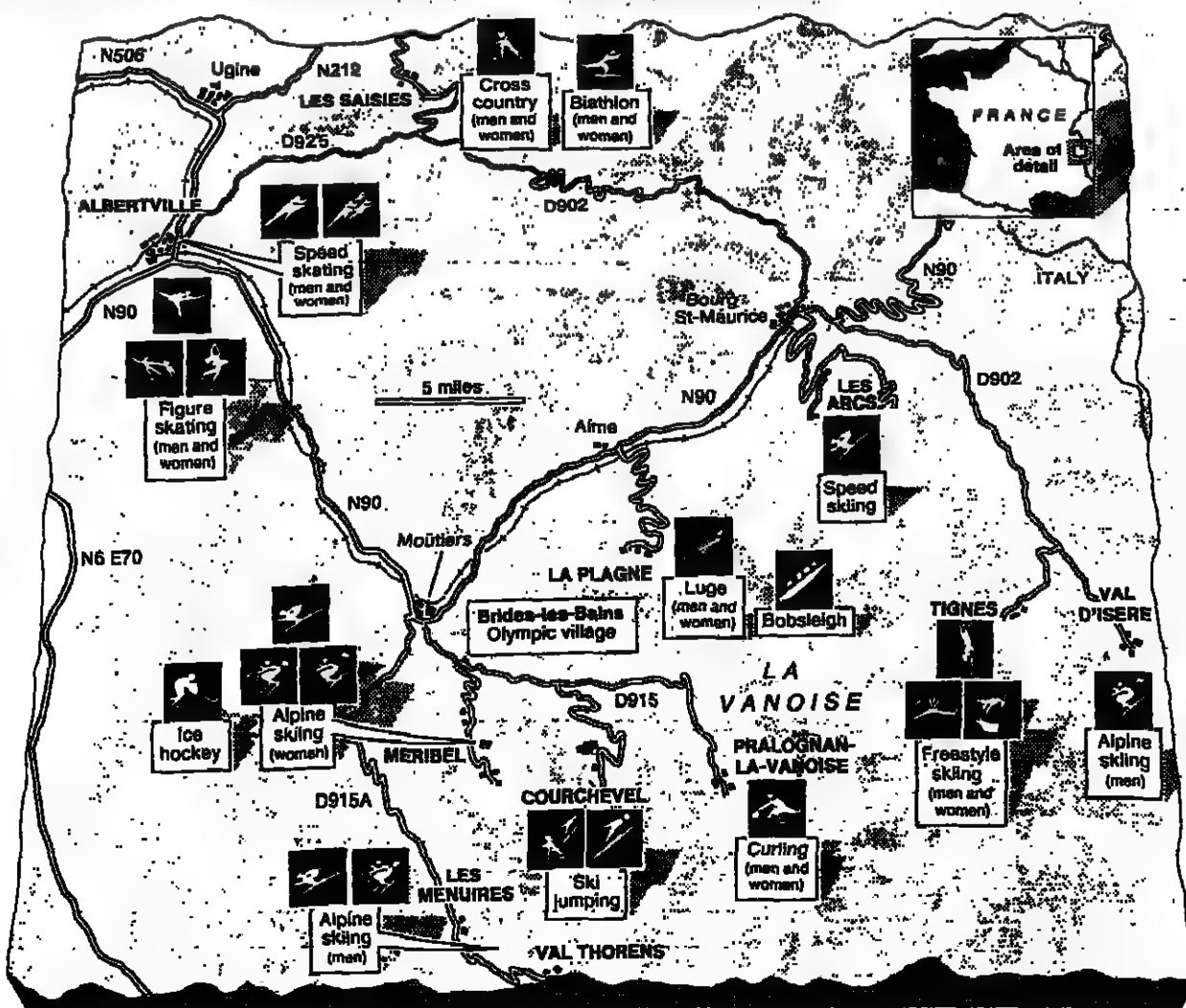
09.00: Bobsleigh, four-man.
09.00: Cross country, women's 30km.
10.45: Speed skating, men's 1,000m.
11.00 and 17.00: Curling.
18.30: Figure skating, men's free programme.
12.15, 16.15 and 20.15: Ice hockey: one ranking game, two semi-finals.

February 22

09.00: Bobsleigh, four-man.
09.00: Cross country, men's 50km.
09.00 and 13.00: Alpine skiing, men's slalom.
11.15: Speed skating, men's 1,500m.
14.00: Curling, finals.
14.00: Figure skating, gala exhibition.
19.30: Short track speed skating, women's 500m; men's 3,000m relay.
12.15, 16.15 and 20.15: Ice hockey: three ranking games.

February 23

14.00: Ice hockey, final.
18.00: Closing ceremony.



Winter playground: the Haute Savoie region of France plays host to the Games for the next 16 days

The Games on television

GONE are the days when skiing was served on a week with Sunday afternoon tea. *Ski Sunday* has evolved into a commitment to winter sport and some 90 hours of coverage, much of it live, will be televised by the BBC from the Winter Olympics over the next two weeks (Denis Tingay writes).

Anchoring the event for the BBC is Desmond Lynam while the commentary team will be led by David Coleman. David Vine, the veteran presenter of *Ski Sunday*, will be guiding viewers down hills and over jumps while Christopher Dean adds an expert touch to the figure skating.

It begins in *Grandstand* today, when the opening ceremony will be live on BBC1. From then on, coverage will encompass the 16 days of competition: *Grandstand* on Saturdays and Sundays will be dedicated to the Games, as will sections of *Sportsnight* and *Match of the Day*.

Eurosport has opted for saturation coverage 24 hours a day. Eurosport's coverage opens at 8.0 this morning with a preview, *The Road to Albertville*, and the first live action is at midday with the ice hockey between France and Canada.

Tomba's attempt to retain his titles can earn him a place in Olympic history

Heinzer leads on downhill path

BY DAVID POWELL

AT ANY other Winter Olympics, the staging of the men's downhill on the opening weekend might leave the rest of Alpine skiing vulnerable to anti-climax. But Albertville is safe. When the downhill is over, we shall find out whether these really are the Albertville Olympics.

Alberto Tomba, the sport's biggest personality, looks ripe to become the first male skier in Olympic history to retain an Alpine title. Tomba, champion in two of the five disciplines, has been showing outstanding form, and if he loses either the slalom or giant slalom it will be an upset.

But first the downhill in Val d'Isère tomorrow. If there is a skier in better form than Tomba, it is Franz Heinzer. The Swiss is on a roll, winning the last three World Cup downhill and breaking Kitzbühel's fearsome Hahnenkamm piste record. He is the clear favourite, stronger than Klammer in 1976 and Killy eight years earlier.

At 29, success came to Heinzer late in life but, now it is, he is not letting go. His record was nothing special until last year; then, in his tenth season, he became World Cup and world champion. In this most dangerous of disciplines Heinzer is the master of the moment but, in a task where a second error can be irrevocably expensive, nothing is taken for granted. If Heinzer fails, any one of a dozen could pounce.

At the top of the list is A. J. Kitt, the New Yorker who won the World Cup downhill in Val d'Isère in December. He was second to Heinzer in Kitzbühel and is arguably America's best ever, better even than Bill Johnson, the 1984 champion.

Although Kitt won in Val d'Isère he will not be on the same piste tomorrow. The Olympic course has been designed especially for the occasion by Bernhard Russi, the 1972 champion. It does not have Kitt's approval. *Le Face de Bellevard* is a twisting downhill, not a fast one, giving the technical skiers more of a chance. "It is not the best test for a downhill for the Olympics," Kitt said.

None the less, within 15 seconds the skiers will reach 80mph. At the Catherine Bump they will fly 120ft into



the air at 50mph. Halfway down is a 90 turn on a convex slope — "like skiing on the outside of a crystal ball" according to Billy Kidd, the racer turned television commentator.

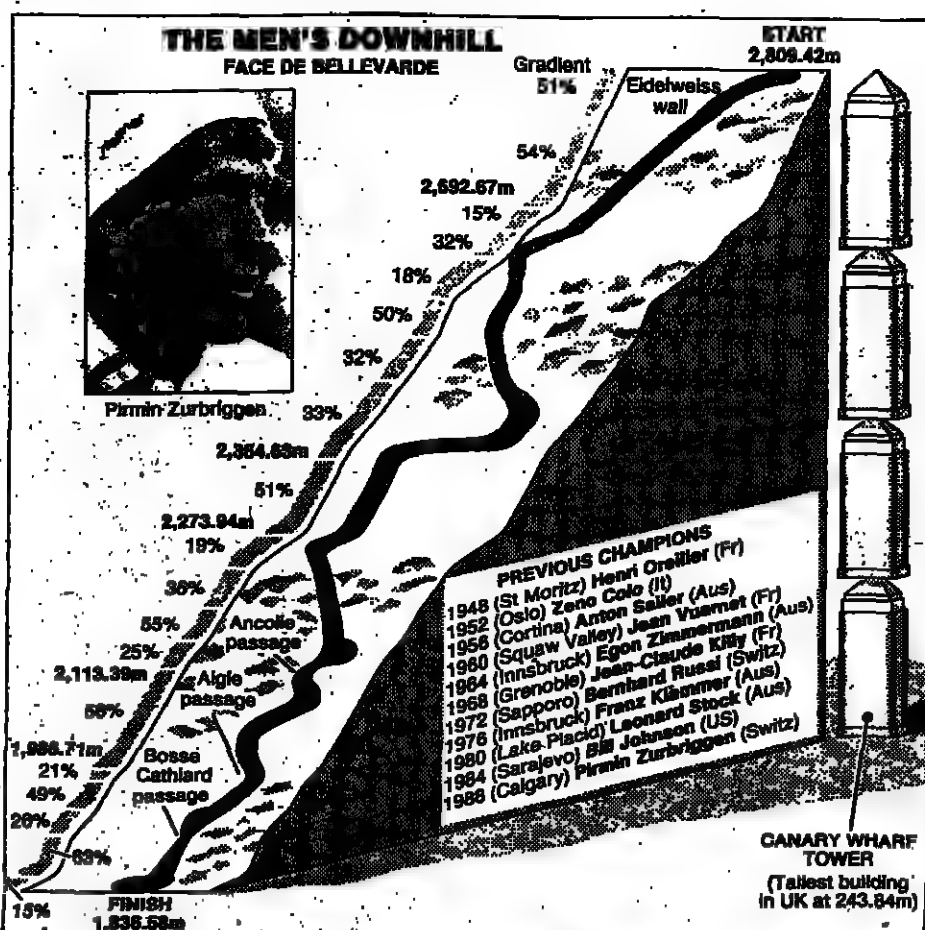
A succession of twists and turns follow into L'Ancoille Passage, a test of a skier's ability to carve a turn through a narrow section. For those who misjudge it, the padding on the rock face should break the fall. Before the finish is another bump which takes the skiers through the air for 150ft — "like sliding over a frozen waterfall," Kidd says.

Heinzer's other main challengers are Markus Wasmeier of Germany, winner of the World Cup in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, and second to Heinzer in Wengen a fortnight ago; Leonhard Stock, of Austria, 12 years after his Olympic triumph at Lake Placid; and Patrick Ortlieb, the Austrian who stands between Heinzer and Kitt in the season's World Cup standings. The British contribution is likely to be peripheral.

The Games will be well into their second week before it is Tomba's turn. He will carry the Italian flag at the opening ceremony today, then shelter from public gaze by training for a week in Italy, returning on the eve of the giant slalom on Tuesday week. The slalom follows three days later on the closing weekend.

Paul Accola, the Swiss leader of the overall World Cup, and two Norwegians, Finn Christian Jagge and Ole Christian Furuseth, are Tomba's most likely challengers.

If Tomba is to become the first male alpine skier to retain an Olympic title, he must hope that two other 1988 champions, Franck Piccard



in the super-giant slalom, and Hubert Strolz in the combined, do not beat him to it. Both are scheduled to appear before Tomba but neither has been prominent this season.

While Heinzer and Tomba appear difficult to beat, the luminaries of the women's circuit have been struggling of late. Forecasting for Meribel, where the five women's Alpine events take place, is difficult. Vreni Schneider, Switzerland's Olympic slalom and giant slalom champion, has failed to finish two of her last four slalom races, and Petra Kronberger, the overall World Cup champion, has not finished in the top three in her last 12 races.

Reputation keeps Schneider as favourite to win her two disciplines while Kronberger, the downhill world champion, knows that the ones to beat in that event are Katja Seizinger of Germany, and Sabine Gschöner, her compatriot. The women's downhill is on *La Roche du Fer*, the Iron Rock. Whether Kronberger is still the iron maiden, is in considerable doubt.



Heinzer: master of the moment in the downhill

Curry returning to a happy hunting ground

BY DAVID POWELL

THE French will presumably be better prepared for Jilly Curry this time. It was in France two years ago that Curry first skied to prominence on the World Cup circuit. The British are not noted for their success in skiing, and the French were caught out by being guided by reputation.

No one could find a tape of the National Anthem: so there was Curry, at the top of the podium, with the German anthem playing. At least they found the right flag. "I checked that out and it looked wonderful," she said.

The name of Curry is set to rise again in Olympic sport. Thirteen years after John took gold in men's figure skating, Jilly is trying for a medal in freestyle skiing. It comprises three disciplines: ballet (a routine set to music); aerials (one spectacular somersault from a specially prepared jump); and moguls, a descent down a steep, bumpy course. Only moguls has full medal status this time, but aerials and ballet are set to follow at the 1994 Games in Lillehammer.

Curry, who has won most of her medals in the combined event, is a contender in the aerials, at which she won a World Cup silver medal in December, and an outsider for a bona fide Olympic medal in the moguls. Aged 29, and the daughter of an Olympic skier, she is in form. At the last event before the Games, in Oberjoch, Germany, last weekend, she won a World Cup gold medal in the combined.

She fulfilled a long-standing ambition to beat the normally invincible World Cup champion, Conny Kissling, from Switzerland. In Curry's two previous gold medal performances, Kissling was either injured or lacked fitness.

Moguls consists of one run of free skiing on a steep, heavily moguled course. The course is 200 to 250 metres long and has a gradient of between 27 and 35 degrees. Two upright jumps are incorporated into the run, which is timed. Seven judges score

the run on a scale of 0 to 7.5 points. The high and low scores are discarded, and the remaining scores combined and added to a speed score to provide a total. Runs are judged on turns, air (height and distance) and speed.

Ballet is a seven-minute routine of spins, axel jumps and pole flips choreographed to music. Aerials is the most spectacular of the three, the competitors using snow ramps to launch into a series of turns, tucks and twists in mid-air.

In the ballet section, Britain has a worthy representative in Julia Snell. She, too, has a chance of a place on the podium, having taken a World Cup silver medal at the beginning of the season. Snelling gave Snell her break in the movies: she was the one who skied across the credits in Bond's *View to a Kill*.

On the men's side, Richard Cobbing has tasted the pinnacle of sporting success but will be making up the numbers in the aerials. A former World Games trampolining gold medal winner, he is now in his first season in the British aerials team. A man for a challenge is Cobbing; he spent six months in a New Jersey amusement park working as a high diver.

In the biathlon, Mike Dixon is attempting to give Britain its first medal for at least three decades. Dixon, aged 29, has beaten all the leading competitors on separate occasions this season in this combination of shooting and cross-country skiing.



Curry: contender

British success

In the 14 Winter Olympics since 1924, Britain has won six gold medals, four silvers and 10 bronze. The gold medals came in 1936 (ice hockey, Garmisch), 1952 (Jeanette Altwegg, figure skating, Oslo), 1964 (Nash and Dixon, two-man bobsleigh, Innsbruck), 1976 (John Curry, figure skating, Innsbruck), 1980 (Robin Cousins, figure skating, Lake Placid) and 1984 (Torvill and Dean, ice dance, Sarajevo).

Three silver medals have been won by figure skaters, one in bobsleighing. Skating, by far Britain's most successful Winter Olympic sport, has brought six bronze medals. Two more came in the luge and one each from bobsleighing and ice hockey.

Old and young

At the age of 63, Kalevi Hakkinen, a Finnish speed skier, will be the oldest competitor in the Games. Hakkinen can take heart from the performances of Oscar Swahn, a Swede, who won a silver medal for shooting running deer in the 1920 Olympics at the age of 72.

Krisztina Czakó, a Hungarian figure skater, will be the youngest competitor at the Games at the age of 13. The International Skating Union waived a minimum age requirement of 14.

Large scale

The 1992 Winter Games will be the biggest. At 13 venues, 2,196 athletes from the 65 competing nations will take part in 14 sports and 65 competitions and 330 gold, silver and bronze medals will be awarded. Organisers say they have sold 750,000 of the 800,000 tickets.

Lost coaching

The British biathlon team has been training without their main coach for a week. Lubos Hecel, a Czechoslovak, had to return to Prague last Sunday after his wife had been involved in a car crash.

1988 medal table

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
Soviet Union	11	9	8	28
East Germany	11	10	5	26
Switzerland	6	6	10	22
Austria	5	6	9	20
West Germany	5	5	8	18
Netherlands	5	4	5	14
Finland	4	4	4	12
Sweden	4	4	4	12
United States	4	4	4	12
Norway	4	4	4	12
Canada	4	4	4	12
Italy	4	4	4	12
Yugoslavia	4	4	4	12
Czechoslovakia	4	4	4	12
France	4	4	4	12
Japan	4	4	4	12
Liechtenstein	4	4	4	12

Niemenen rules the new wave

BY MICHAEL COLEMAN

WITH uncanny timing, Finland has produced a boy skid jumper tailor-made to repeat Matti Nykanen's triple gold success at Calgary four years ago. The Flying Finn this time is Toni Nieminen, aged 16, who took the World Cup lead on December 1 and has held it ever since.

At Courchevel, he has every chance of winning both the 90-metre (normal hill) and 120-metre (large hill) individual titles, and to lead Finland to the team gold on the 120-metre hill.

Nieminen was one of the first to switch to the V-style, which has dominated the season's contests, caught several champions by surprise, and split the sport into pro and anti-V camps. Using the body as a virtual parachute, young pretenders found they could attain maximum lift, and reach out to distances which previously required a long apprenticeship.

Typical of the new wave is Andreas Goldberg, aged 19, the first from Austria to convert. Last season he was jumping in the Europa Cup, the sport's second division; he goes to the Winter Olympics as a member of Austria's six-man team with solid medal potential.

The classicists, however, are not admitting defeat. Among the leading men who have tried, without success, to convert is Jens Weissflog, who won Olympic gold for East Germany at Sarajevo in 1984. Still a prodigious performer, he withdrew from the World Cup in mid-season to mend an injury, and also to attempt to come to terms with the new style. He failed in the latter, and will present himself at Courchevel using the more graceful take-off that has made this sport a thing of beauty.

"A good jumper in classical style can still win a medal," Weissflog says. The picture will be clearer after tomorrow and the 90-metre individual event. The 120-metre team competition is five days later, with the large hill individual event on February 16.

O'Reilly heads challenge

BY JOHN HENNESSY

THESE are heady days for British speed skating. Habitually cast at the Winter Olympics as carrying the spears while the Dutch, the Americans and others carried off the medals, Britain now has two, or perhaps three medals, in its sights.

This transformation flows from the International Olympic Committee's decision to admit short-track racing into the Games. Four years ago the new discipline successfully passed the probationary test of a demonstration sport in Calgary and is now included as a fully-fledged competitive event: in fact, four events.

And a rip-roaring, blood-curdler of a sport it is. Whereas the traditional race is not a race at all, but rather a time-trial with a clock as the enemy, those on the short track have to apply tactical nous as well as explosive challenges for position in the restricted elbow-room of a 110-metre lap.

It is in this exciting environment that Britain has unearthed a world champion in Wilf O'Reilly, son of an Irish mother and West Indian father. O'Reilly, aged 26, proved in Sydney last year that his Olympic victory in Calgary had been no fluke.

Nor do British hopes end

there. Matt Jasper won a silver in Sydney, and a relay team led by O'Reilly brought home the bronze.

The principal opposition seems likely to come from South Korea and Japan. There is no British competitor among the women, where according to Ken Pendry, father of British short-track skating, "the Chinese are incredible, but beware those big, strong Canadians".

On the outside, long-track rink, the star attractions among the women are expected to be Gunda Niemann (née Kleemann), once of East Germany, and Bonnie Blair, of the United States. The American thrives on shorter



O'Reilly: medal chance

distances, the German over 1,500 metres and beyond. A frantic struggle is expected in the men's sprint (500 metres), involving the same two nations — Uwe-Jens Mey, the German holder, and Dan Jansen. Mey recorded 36.43sec in Davos last month, improving his own world record by two-hundredths of a second. Jansen, for his part, has sped round the fast Calgary oval in an unofficial 36.26sec, giving a speed of nearly 31mph.

Over the longer distances, Johann Olav Koss has an army of Norwegian well-wishers: He was second to Falko Zandstra, of The Netherlands, in the European championships last month, but the aficionados do not take that result too seriously. Koss is more at home than most on "poor ice" (outdoors), as at Albertville.

As one British observer reports, Koss had the look at Heerenveen, where the European championships were staged, not of a serious competitor but of a man undergoing training with a view to peaking at the Olympics a month later. He is that calculating kind of man.

The opening competition in the short track programme is on February 18; the outdoor events begin on the 400 metres track tomorrow with the women's 3,000 metres.

Swedes to have a high time

WHILE 12 countries again compete in the Olympic tournament, which is being staged at Meribel, the format of the competition has changed (Norman de Mesquita writes).

After the round-robin section, in which there will be two pools of six, eight teams will advance — four from each pool — to the later stages, which will be run on a knockout basis.

Games will be three periods of 20 minutes and those ending level will have a ten-minute overtime period, in which the first goal will decide the winners. During the knockout stages, penalty shots will be used if there is no further score in overtime. Sweden, the world champions, are favourites for a first

gold medal and their team includes several veteran players with experience of the National Hockey League (NHL), including Bengt Gustafsson, Hakan Loob and Mats Naslund.

In contrast, Canada will be unable to call on their NHL players and will do well to win a medal. With the season in full swing in the United States, the NHL clubs have first call on the players.

However, the Canadians do have Eric Lindros, a talented 18-year-old who has turned down a professional career.

Despite having lost a number of experienced players to the professional ranks,

the Commonwealth of Independent States still have an abundance of talent. Olympic champions, when known as the Soviet Union, their only weakness could be goal-tending.

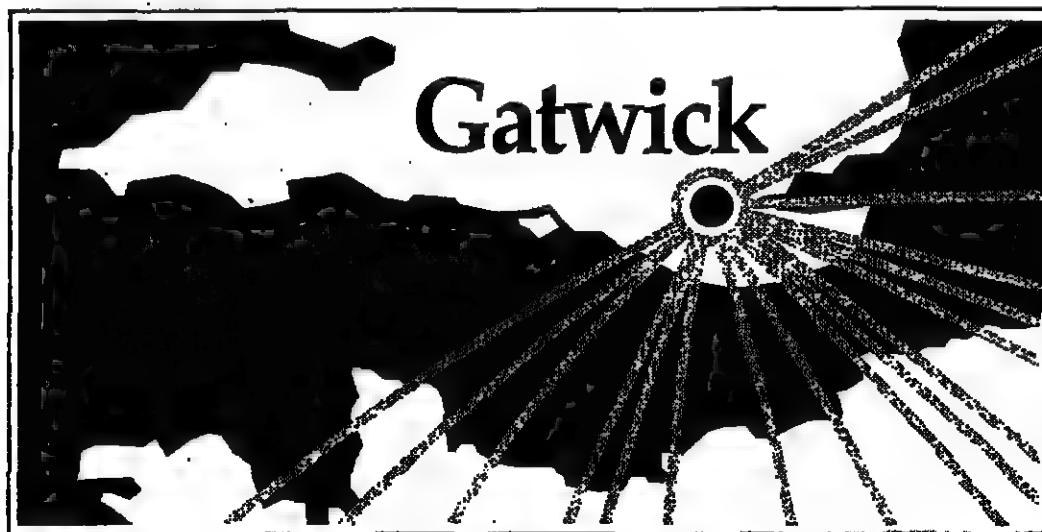
Other likely medal winners include Finland, who took silver in 1988, and Czechoslovakia, although both have lost leading players to the NHL. France, the host country, will find the going hard: they play in the opening game against Canada today.

One other factor that might influence the outcome is the altitude of Meribel. At 1,700m above sea level, it will put a premium on fitness and stamina.

POOL A: Germany, Finland, Sweden, Poland, Italy, United States.
POOL B: Canada, CIS, Czechoslovakia, France, Norway, Switzerland.

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Botham makes cameo appearance with bat Second-day points go to N Zealand as they strive for lead

FROM ALAN LEE, CRICKET CORRESPONDENT, IN WELLINGTON

JUST in case the heady experience of two consecutive victories had dulled the memory, England were sternly reminded at the Basin Reserve yesterday of the long traditions of Test cricket in New Zealand.

The second day of this final Test match brought 170 runs from 94 overs. The cricket was unambitious, much of it unambitious. At different stages, it was possible to believe both sides had nothing beyond a draw in mind. It was redolent of England's last tour here, in 1987-8.

It cannot be denied, however, that this was New Zealand's most satisfying day of the series. For them, every morsel stolen from England's laden table is to be savoured. What must also be considered is that this pitch, although deathly slow, is dry and crusty. It is turning already and could present more problems on the last two days. A first-innings lead may be decisive.

It was a considerable achievement for a raw New Zealand attack to take the last five England wickets yesterday.

day for 66. It was equally admirable that John Wright and Andrew Jones, under pressure after the customary loss of an early wicket, should bat through to the close and complete their second century stand of the series.

Hick bowled well, if at times one longed to see him give the ball more air. He did spin it past the outside edge of the left-handed Wright more than once, however, and his 17 overs for 19 runs indicated why Graham Gooch has developed a faith in his bowling which, evidently, he does not extend to Dermot Reeve.

Now well into his third Test, Reeve had by the end of the day bowled a total of 17 overs for England. He was not required during the New Zealand second innings in Auckland, and Gooch ignored him yesterday, when his natural outswing must have been worth trying.

Reeve at least was fit and bursting to bowl which, for more than an hour, DeFreitas was not. He was clearly holding something back during his new-ball spell and went off for treatment to

a groin condition which has lasted a worryingly long time. Micky Stewart, the team manager, said: "He felt it every time he tried to gallop in and it stopped him letting it go as he wanted to."

DeFreitas is not, as yet, in any doubt for the World Cup, where he has an important part to play, but the perceived role of Reeve is no longer plain. While his bowling has been shelved, his batting has developed a form of strokeless desperation, so that he is barely recognisable as the man capable of playing so innovatively in county cricket.

Yesterday's innings of 18 was his lowest in four Test starts but, at 167 minutes, his longest. His 124 runs for England have occupied more than nine hours and he has apparently encountered a mental barrier, far from exclusive to him, which prevents him risking his wicket by playing naturally.

Although the team target was upwards of 350, purely negative batting was not what was required here and, on a still and somnolent morning, with Mount Victoria looming imposingly over this attractive ground, the crowd might easily have settled for a pre-lunch nap but for the arrival of the old legend himself.

Wellington's morning newspaper carried an advertisement for the cricket yesterday. It simply read: "Botham at the Basin. Starts 10.30." Within 20 minutes of that time, Test cricket's latest man to reach 100 Tests caps was marching in, applauded every step of his way. The expectation was out of all proportion, of course, and after clubbing two rapid fours, Botham played quietly for 50 minutes before mistiming a characteristic off-drive.

His day was not over. He took a sharp, instinctive catch, head-high at third slip, to dismiss Hartland in Lawrence's third over, and when he came on to bowl in the last hour he got a few long-hops over his system before losing his length and his inswing to trouble both batsmen.

Tufnell tried everything, 17 overs of experimentation, but the turn was too slow to be penetrative and Wright was at his most immovable. In what is likely to be his final Test (though we have heard that before), one of the sport's most personable characters has already defied England for three-and-a-half hours.



Safe arrival: Omar Henry, a left-arm spin bowler, boards the South Africa team bus after flying in to Perth from Harare, Zimbabwe, yesterday

Australians will flock to see the return of South Africa

FROM JOHN WOODCOCK IN PERTH

SUCH is the interest in the return of South Africa to the playing fields of Australia, almost as many people — 25,000 — are expected to watch their cricketmen take on Western Australia in a day-night match here tomorrow as attended the whole of the fifth Test match that finished on the same ground on Wednesday.

The South Africans flew in from Harare yesterday afternoon, not only to a welcome from the Australian Cricket Board but also to something significantly rarer — a cordial demonstration by the African National Congress (ANC) in the city.

Just as they did when they arrived in Calcutta to play

India in November, the South African management described yesterday as the greatest day in their country's cricket history.

But it is the season for them. When, next month, they play West Indies, Pakistan and Sri Lanka for the first time, those, too, will be red-letter days.

The presence of South Africa in the World Cup gives it an extra dimension. They are the new blood the game has been needing.

No one is in much doubt that they have damaged their own prospects by leaving out Clive Rice and Jimmy Cook — one an inspirational leader, the other a batsman of great achievement — but no side

will be working harder at their game than South Africa and, in Kepler Wessels, they have a captain who knows Australian conditions very well.

With experience counting for so much in one-day cricket, let alone in as intense a competition as the World Cup, the omission of Rice and Cook — what an opening partnership Cook and Wessels would have made — defied comprehension.

Asked about it yesterday, Wessels said simply that he did not choose the South African side himself. But he was, in fact, a co-opted member of the committee that did.

It can be said, truthfully, that fielding has always been seen as being of paramount importance in South African cricket and, in that respect, Rice, at 42, and Cook, at 32, would have slowed things down.

Without them, though, South Africa seem to rue to have relegated themselves from serious contenders to fairly rank outsiders.

Even for visiting sides who know the pitch and breeze and the ground and lights, a limited-over match against Western Australia in Perth is one of the harder ways of starting a tour, whether to Australia or anywhere else. In the last seven years, every country to have come to Perth has lost.

Lewis looks to continue his remarkable run

BY DAVID POWELL, ATHLETICS CORRESPONDENT

HE DID not mean to sound conceited but Carl Lewis underlined his stature in athletics yesterday. "I do not think the meet promoters would allow me to quit," Lewis said as he prepared for his first race in Britain for six years. Quite Lewis's best years are ahead of him.

That's what he says. And his predictions are worth heeding. While in London 16 months ago he promised he would run the 100 metres in less than 9.90 seconds. At the time his claim seemed vaguely absurd. Lewis, approaching 30, was speaking while hobbling on crutches after a knee operation. Surely his best days were over? But within a year he had taken the world record down to 9.86sec in the greatest sprint ever, the Tokyo world championship final.

Today, in Glasgow, he is reunited with three opponents from that memorable evening. Denis Mitchell, Frankie Fredericks and Ray Stewart, racing over 60 metres in the Pearl Assurance indoor meeting. He would not mind losing, he said, as long as he runs a personal best time and gives a sound mechanical performance.

Having completed the most satisfying three months of winter training he has had for many years, Lewis is aiming for under 6.60sec, but with no thought of matching Andre Cason's ten-day-old world record of 6.45sec. "The 60 metres is as different from the 100 as the 100 is from the 200," he said. Not that he wanted to be

underestimated. "One thing people do not realise is that, in Tokyo, I went through 60 metres in under 6.50 seconds," he said. And already Lewis has put his winter's training to good effect, long jumping 8.49 metres on Wednesday, his best indoors for seven years.

The winner of six Olympic and seven world titles, Lewis is probably the greatest athlete of all time and he can put the argument beyond doubt this summer. Although he will contest the United States trials in four events, he will select only three for Barcelona.

But, from what he was saying yesterday, it is unthinkable he will not contest the Olympic long jump. Beaten by Mike Powell's world record in Tokyo, Lewis has more to prove in that than anything else. Not to others, but to himself.

"He jumped well and won, so whether I want to or not I have to accept that," Lewis said. "My father always said 'don't get mad, get even' and the only way to get even is to try to jump further. I use it as inspiration. Either I am going to realise or forget about the event."

He said that he was driven by the desire to run faster and jump further. "I feel I will be better prepared to jump further, my goal is to run faster." Retirement seemed the last thing on his mind. But when? "If I start to see it go... or if I am crazy enough to start turning down a sprinting career." Or, presumably, if the meet promoters stop calling.

Cross country hopes grow

BRITAIN'S standing in world cross country should take a turn for the better in the coming weeks after a spell in the doldrums (David Powell writes).

World medals in Boston on March 21 are in prospect for the athletes successful in Basingstoke tomorrow at the British trials for the world championships. "We improved to fifth last year, and potentially, we have a stronger team," Bud Baldaro, the British men's squad manager, said yesterday.

Hopes for the women are even higher. The first four tomorrow will team up with two of the world's outstanding distance runners, Liz McColgan and Jill Hunter, in Boston.

It is unfortunate that the selection system rules out Andrea Wallace, the world road race silver medal winner and a prolific cross-country runner, who did not wish to be chosen because she is preparing for the London marathon.

John Hamby, Wallace's coach, said that she would have considered the world championships if selected: so three discretionary places might have precipitated her inclusion, the first two places going to Hunter and McColgan.

The consolation is that Hayley Haining has developed from the world's second best junior last year into a successful senior. She is the trial favourite, with Lisa York, Sonia McGeorge, Alison Wyeth, Andrea Whitcombe and Angie Hulley the other main contenders.

The men's trial has attracted a profusion of leading track runners: Richard Nurkovic, Rob Denmark, Jack Buckner, Ian Hamer and Colin Walker.

"It will be interesting to see how these people fare on a course designed for fast running," Baldaro said.

Nurkovic is the only one of the group without a medal from an international championship but, as winner of the English national cross country for the past two years, and as a top-five finisher over 10,000 metres in European and world championships, his CV for the job is second to none.

Eamonn Martin, who missed the trial, can be assured of an discretionary place and there will be one for Paul Davies-Hale, if Baldaro can persuade him to change his mind and run in Boston.

Although only the first six tomorrow are guaranteed places in the team of nine, seventh position looks well worth running for.

Hodges joins the 1,000 club

Wanganui: Carol Hodges yesterday became the fifth English woman to reach 1,000 Test runs as the touring team reached 137 for nine in reply to New Zealand's 212 all out at the close of play on the second day of the second Test at Cook's Gardens (A Special Correspondent writes).

Hodges, who needed three runs to reach the milestone, was out for 15 to join Rachael Heyhoe Flint, Ian Britton, Myrtle MacLagan and Enid Bakewell as the previous

1,000 run makers for the England women's Test team. England made very slow progress on an unpredictable pitch after New Zealand's last five wickets went for the addition of a mere 28 runs when they resumed at their overnight total of 184 for five.

Only Helen Plimmer, the New Zealand opening batswoman, provided any resistance, with Britain contributing 21 before being dismissed when Nancy Williams lunged on to a stinging drive off her own bowling.

SCORES: New Zealand 212 (Dodd 78, P. Richards 52, J. Chamberlain 5 for 94; England 137 for 9).

John Carr has rejoined Middlesex on a two-year contract after deciding to leave his job as a trainee with Barclays Bank. Carr, aged 28, retired from the first-class game at the end of the 1989 season, but made occasional appearances the following season. He spent last summer playing for Herefordshire.

Later this year, during the southern summer of 1992-3, South Africa will be visited

Start of a scramble

THERE is something of a scramble among the Test match-playing countries to get in on the act with South Africa (John Woodcock writes). Now their isolation has ended, everyone wants to go there or host them.

Their first Test since returning to the fold — their first, in fact, for 22 years — will probably be against West Indies in Barbados from April 17 to 22.

Later this year, during the southern summer of 1992-3, South Africa will be visited

first by India, who are pencilled in to play four Tests and seven one-day internationals between November and early January.

In February, West Indies and Pakistan are likely to play a triangular one-day tournament in South Africa. The provisional plan for 1993-4 is for South Africa and Australia to exchange visits.

Eastern Province will play two limited-over matches against a World XI at Scarborough on August 29 and 30.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Hull must be on their guard against Eagles

BY KEITH MACKLIN

IF THERE is to be a further giant-killing act in this weekend's Silk Cut Challenge Cup second-round ties, the likeliest bet is that it will be in Sheffield's Don Valley Stadium.

Hull will not relish the trip to face the second division favourites, Sheffield Eagles, who are playing excellent rugby, spearheaded by their Great Britain international, Darryl Powell. If Hull do not produce better defence than at Rochdale in the first round they could become another first division casualty.

The outstanding tie is between Leeds and St Helens today. St Helens are in ferocious mood and mood and they should topple a Leeds side missing the influence of Hanley and Schofield.

The third division side, Doncaster, will travel to Halifax tomorrow with high hopes of producing another surprise after knocking out the first division's bottom team, Swinton, Halifax are strengthened by the return

after injury of the powerful front row forward, Brendan Hill, and the experienced scrum half, Paul Harkin.

Emerging as dark horses for what had once seemed an unlikely championship and cup double are Castelford. They should have no difficulty against Hunslet.

Martin Offiah scored two tries when Wigan beat Cronulla 20-16 at the start of the world sevens in Sydney.



Schofield: missing

HOCKEY

Hounslow should rise to double test

BY SYDNEY FRISKIN

HOUNSLOW have two tasks this weekend, neither of which seems particularly daunting. They ought to win their Hockey Association Cup quarter-final today against Doncaster and their Pizz Express national league match against Bourneville tomorrow.

Much depends on what method Hounslow, the cup holders, use which is either to go two goals down and recov-

er or take a three-goal lead and lose ground. Their defence will miss the goal authority of Peter Who, who is unavailable. Doncaster, of the second division, are the only northern survivors. Their fighting qualities, inspired by Stoves, White and Wood, have taken them where they are.

Southgate will resume a skirmish which was halted on November 24 when they lost 2-1 to Havant in the league.

Today Southgate travel to Havant where their task in the cup appears to be a little more difficult, particularly as Shaw, their captain, is fighting a bout of flu. They will persevere with their younger players, Gishorne, Waugh, Freeman and Drake. Back in the squad is Castenskiold who has been busy with examinations.

Teddington will field an unchanged side for their cup game against Stourport, with

D'Mello again taking the field at right half. Paul Smith has recovered from injury and may play in midfield at some time in the match. Riley is unavailable for tomorrow's league game at East Grinstead.

St Albans, who lost 2-1 at home to Teddington last week, can expect a hard cup match today against East Grinstead and an equally severe test when they visit Stourport tomorrow.

Indian Gymkhana, having secured their second win of the season last week, will be at home tomorrow to Nettleham, who held Stourport to a 3-3 draw. Gymkhana have improved considerably and need a win to ease their relegation fears.

In the second division Surbiton, Reading and Canterbury continue to battle for supremacy. Surbiton and Reading should emerge victorious tomorrow as should Canterbury, who could be stretched by Richmond, Guildford, in fourth place, relying on their top scorers, Jennings and Knapp, can expect a strong challenge when they visit Isea.

Depth	Conditions	Weather	Temp	Last
(cm)	Rare to resort	(Spm)	(°C)	array
AUSTRIA				
Bond	60 200 good open sunny	+	5/2	
Kitzbühel	60 140 good open sunny	0	6/2	
Baldern	60 130 good open sunny	-	6/2	
St Anton	60 200 good open sunny	-	5/2	
FRANCE				
Avoriaz	110 180 good open sunny	-	4/2	
Val d'Isère	120 240 good open sunny	-	5/2	
Val de Vanoise	120 240 good open sunny	-	5/2	
ITALY				
Bormio	80 145 fair open sunny	0	23/1	
Cortina	80 110 good open sunny	0	4/2	
Corvara	80 180 good open sunny	-	4/2	
SWITZERLAND				
Crans Montana	100 180 good open sunny	-	5/2	
Davos	120 230 good open sunny	-	5/2	
Mürren	120 210 good open sunny	0	5/2	
Gstaad	120 210 good open sunny	-	5/2	

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Leeds's Gallic new boy waits for League action

Cantona called on to lead attack against England

By Clive White

ERIC Cantona was yesterday called on by Michel Platini, the French national team manager, for his squad for the international match against England at Wembley on February 19, but he is likely to be no more than a substitute for Leeds United in today's first division match against Oldham Athletic at Boundary Park.

Cantona, who is on loan to the Football League leaders from Nîmes until the end of the season, is considered insufficiently match fit by Howard Wilkinson, the Leeds manager, to take his place in their line-up yet. There is a good chance, though, that he will make an appearance at some stage of today's game while a starting appearance cannot be too far away with Lee Chapman, the main goalscorer, still recovering from an arm fracture.

Cantona, aged 25, walked out on Sheffield Wednesday eight days ago when the club attempted to extend his trial

period. Trevor Francis, the Wednesday manager, may have needed a longer look at the controversial Cantona, but Platini seems to be in little doubt that his fellow countryman's assets — 18 goals in 20 internationals — outweigh his liabilities.

He was suspended from the national squad for ten months last year after insulting Henri Michel, the former trainer, and threatened to quit the game after being suspended by the French league in December, an action which precipitated his move across the Channel.

Like Cantona, Mark Hughes, the Manchester United forward, may feel he has nothing to prove. To the surprise of many, Hughes was dropped by United for the FA Cup tie against Southampton on Wednesday though he was called upon in the second half. Whether or not it has served as a gee-up to the Welshman, we may discover should he return to the

starting line-up against Wednesday at Old Trafford as United continue their duel with Leeds for the championship.

That is by no means certain judging from the remarks of Alex Ferguson, the manager. "All strikers go through spells when they are not scoring enough," he said. "Hughes has scored three in nine games, I had to leave out Brian McClair earlier this season and his response was to score twice after coming on as substitute," Ferguson said. "Everyone is aware he is a good player but the fans know I have to pick a team to get results."

It is no secret that Ferguson has had it in mind for some time to replace Hughes eventually with a more prolific scoring forward and the name of Alan Shearer, of Southampton, was again on the lips of Old Trafford's demanding supporters as the south coast club removed United from the FA Cup.

Transfer speculation surrounding Gordon Durie and Gary Mabbutt was strenuously denied by Peter Shreeves, the Tottenham Hotspur manager, on the eve of the Rumbelows Cup semi-final, first leg against Nottingham Forest tomorrow.

Indeed the story, he said, was not the fictional one of who might be leaving the club but the factual one of who had decided not to. Steve Sedgley has come off the transfer list at his own request.

Paisley stands down

BOB Paisley ended an association with Liverpool spanning more than 50 years when he resigned as a club director yesterday (see Ross writes). Paisley, who stepped down because of health problems, was awarded a life vice-presidency of the club.

"He has no equal in terms of management and prize-

winning," David Moores, the Liverpool chairman, said. "His firm but gentle approach earned him the respect of everyone within football."

Paisley, aged 73, led Liverpool to six League championships, three League Cups and one UEFA Cup.

Chelsea v Crystal Palace

Don't expect a speedy return from a heel injury gives Chelsea a selection taster following Casanova's arrival. The problem would be eased by the withdrawal of Allen, who is doubtful with flu. With Elliott returning at centre back, Bonny is able to fill the void created by Bonny's departure. Palace will be unchanged, which means still no place for Gray.

Coventry v Liverpool

Liverpool have been unable to gain clearance in time for Kozma, their newly signed Hungarian, to make his debut but Redknapp will start his first game in place of Molloy, who has a leg injury. Nicol and Thomas are again unavailable. Deftell is set to play his first match for Coventry since the defeat of Arsenal in September. Happy days.

Everton v QPR

Johnston is set to play for Everton wearing a protective covering on his injured wrist. Beardsley has recovered from a hip injury which led to his substitution last Sunday. McDonald and Beardsley return for Rangers, who are unbeaten in ten League games.

Luton v Norwich

Luton's misfortune with injuries to their forwards continues when Gray suffered a release in a comeback game. Norwich, who would appear to have turned the corner after two consecutive victories, include Culverhouse in their squad for the first time

Sheffield Utd v Man City

City may have to make some improvement on their recent output of a single goal in each of their last six games if they are to beat Utd. The team have scored 17 from the same number. Not bad for a side who many may have made the mistake of assuming were in decline.

Wimbledon v Aston Villa

After their FA Cup defeat at Derby, Villa could have problems at centre back where there is a shortage of cover for McGrath who is doubtful, as is Yorke. Their leading scorer, Neil Aspin, is also doubtful for Wimbledon because of a leg injury. Aspin and Fitzgerald are held in reserve.

Manchester U v Sheffield Wed

Both sides will be looking to bounce back after midweek disappointments in the FA Cup, although United's loss could be greater than Wednesday's. Wilson, Bart-Williams and Johnson are added to their squad.

Notes Co v Arsenal

County, who recently held Manchester United to a draw, can be relied upon to excel themselves again in the FA Cup win over Blackpool. They have not too much to do. Williams, on loan from Leeds, Chris Short, Harding and Agnew are all in contention but there is a doubt over Lund, Arsenal, without a win in eight games, could be without Roccia, who has an ankle injury. Partridge stands by. Campbell is recalled to the squad but not Linper.

Oldham v Leeds

Doing Manchester United a favour will be the last thing on the minds of Oldham, their near neighbours, whose main concern is their own perilous position. Milligan must prove his fitness after back and ankle injuries but Marshall has overcome a sore toe. Cantona is assured of at least a place on the Leeds' bench. Stender appears to have recovered from an ankle injury.

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Upper class: Terry Cooper, the manager, aiming to take Birmingham out of the third division

A pin-up that spurs Albion

By Clive White

THE pin-up girl in the home team's dressing-room at The Hawthorns is not your usual page three offering. Though a source of inspiration just the same to the players of West Bromwich Albion, she is one pin-up whom none of them should wish to see again in a similar pose.

The young lady in question is in tears, a Throldes supporter baring only her emotions on that day in May last year when Albion suffered the shame of relegation to the third division for the first time in its 113-year history.

Bobby Gould, the Albion manager, vowed that the photo, which he had specially enlarged, will remain on the changing room wall for as long as he is manager, as a warning against repetition of such a painful experience.

Albion, of course, were not the first midlands giant to suffer such a fate; the precedent had been set by Wolverhampton Wanderers six years earlier before finally landing in the fourth.

Given that they also took an army of 40,000 with

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sheff Wed	18	4	4	4	28	28	58
Sheff Utd	18	4	4	4	28	28	58
Sheff Utd	18	4	4	4	28	28	58
Sheff Utd	18	4	4	4	28	28	58
Sheff Utd	18	4	4	4	28	28	58
Sheff Utd	18	4	4	4	28	28	58
Sheff Utd	18	4	4	4	28	28	58
Sheff Utd	18	4	4	4	28	28	58
Sheff Utd	18	4	4	4	28	28	58
Sheff Utd	18	4	4	4	28	28	58

them to the Leyland Daf final at Wembley last season, one has to ask why their average attendance is no higher than 15,000. Cooper understands why. "If I'd been a Birmingham fan for the past ten years, I'd be just as wary about rushing back."

With so many players under the age of 24, Birmingham have time on their side. They also have a great deal of potential in Ian Rodger, Simon Sturridge and Paul Mardon, who has attracted Liverpool's interest, not to mention the manager's son, Mark, who has recently been on trial at Anfield.

Earlier this season, a run in the Rumbelows Cup gave them the opportunity to size themselves up against first division opposition. Luton Town proved no match for them and — neither did Crystal Palace, who were spared by Birmingham's poor finishing.

To rectify the problem, which does not seem to have restrained Birmingham in the third division, Cooper recently returned to Exeter, his previous club, and came back with Darren

Rowbotham. "If we can produce chances now, he'll stick them in for us," Cooper said confidently.

He would have liked to have signed Kevin Drinkell, who had been loan with them from Coventry City and who scored their winner in the game at The Hawthorns, but however promising the future it does not yet extend to paying first division wages.

Cooper, the one time Leeds United and England full back, learned all about living within one's means at Bristol City where a place on the board gave him an even sharper appreciation of finances. (He is also a director at Birmingham.) It taught him during his time there and later at Exeter to keep one eye on the field and the other on the cash register.

Old habits die hard and when asked before the Rumbelows tie at Kenilworth Road whether he had needed to motivate his players in any way, he replied: "Did I heck, I just told them: 'There are a load of scousers out there, go and get your self a move.'"

Fortunately, the Birmingham supporters are used to his little jokes.

Aldershot defy warning not to play

ALDERSHOT are prepared to break the law to play what could be their last Football League game today.

The proposed administrators, Stoy Hayward, have told the club it will be in breach of company law if the fourth of their matches with Walsall at the Recreation Ground goes ahead. They say Aldershot, £1 million in debt, are insolvent and are trading illegally. But Aldershot's chairman, Trevor Gladwell, said yesterday: "I know that I am going to get hammered and

fined, but I am Aldershot born and bred. This could be our last match, so we have got to play it at home."

If Aldershot's directors keep trading they could be liable for some of the club's debts under the 1986 Insolvency Act.

In the last week the club's bank accounts were frozen by the High Court, so that no wages could be paid. The Crystal Palace director, Simon Hume-Kendall, then pulled out of his bid to mount a rescue package, and the

Inland Revenue filed a winding-up petition with the High Court.

Football League officials were unaware of the latest development. "We would be very concerned if we knew that any of our clubs were knowingly breaking the law and trading while insolvent," a spokesman, Ian Cotton, said.

West Ham United's managing director, Peter Storrer, yesterday announced changes to the club's contentious bond scheme, which has

prompted pitch protests by supporters. He said the changes would save supporters money, and were the last concessions the club would make. Crystal Palace, who have home advantage against Stockport County in the Autoglass Trophy northern section semi-final, to be played in the week beginning March 16. Rotherham United or Burnley are at home to Huddersfield Town in the other tie. The draw for the southern area semi-finals will be made in a fortnight's time.

RUGBY UNION

Price is in line for call to duty

By Gerald Davies

SWANSEA's comprehensive win over Cardiff on Wednesday evening, in a match brought forward because of Swansea's rearranged cup-tie with Oldham today, meant they climbed back to the top of the Heineken League first division ahead of Pontypool on superior try count.

Pontypool, however, have today's home game in hand and, bearing in mind they have not lost to their opponents, Newbridge, in nine years, they could well be back on top again this evening.

They will need, though, to stop a team who have won four of their last five matches, including their postponed cup fixture against Maesteg last weekend, when they edged home with a dropped goal in extra time.

If Pontypool are to maintain their momentum, they will have to draw on the reserve strength of their squad. With their props, Muzzey and Crowley, out they have to dig far for their reserve prop, Graham Price, the rock of Wales's golden age team, could well don his former club's jersey once more in a team which will not be announced until today.

Most certainly, Pontypool will be without Dean Oswald, their New Zealand No. 8, who was suspended for 11 weeks after being sent off against Newport a fortnight ago. He has used this time to sort out his hernia problem.

Phil Davies, the Welsh No. 8 until he dislocated his elbow two months ago, returns for third-placed Llanelli against Pontypool.

BADMINTON

Hall makes quick trip to last eight

DARREN Hall, aiming to win a record sixth men's singles title in the English national championships, hurried to the quarter-finals in less than three-quarters of an hour and without dropping a game in two matches at Torbay leisure centre yesterday (Richard Eaton writes).

The top seed and former European champion, from Essex, beat Alan Alexander, from Kent, a last-minute substitute in the draw, in 14 minutes. Paul Edvane, of Hampshire, offered more resistance in the second round, but Hall still needed only 28 minutes to go through, winning 15-5, 15-5.

The third seed, Peter Smith, found his first round opponent more difficult. Smith needed three games and almost an hour to beat Brian Wallwork, an England selector and former England international, now aged 41.

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Wedding bells

Athletics: Fatima Whitbread, the former world javelin champion, yesterday announced that she plans to marry Andy Norman, the British Athletic Federation promotions officer, next year.

Conner supported

Yachting: Dennis Conner's syndicate yesterday announced a new sponsorship, of about \$3 million, but it will not be enough to build a second yacht for the America's Cup defender trials.

Army to the fore

Skating: The British Army took the first three places and the team award in the downhill at the final day of the Fortakabin British International Services Alpine skiing championships at Altenmarkt Zauchensee, Austria. Peter Cooper won in 1min 28.65sec. The Army won both the super-G and the inter-services team challenge cup. The Royal Air Force women retained their inter-service title.

Wild cards dealt

Tennis: Neil Broad, Sean Cole, Andrew Foster and Andrew Richardson have been given wild-card entries

THE TIMES

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NON-LEAGUE FOOTBALL

Police sides head for a Wembley meeting

By Walter Gamble

COLIN Brookes joined Manchester United on the same day as Nobby Stiles, but "foolishly got homesick and ran home to Barnsley". After playing on the left wing for Barnsley, West Bromwich Albion, Peterborough, Southampton and Yeovil, Brookes left professional football at 25 and became a policeman.

Twenty-five years later, a constable at Wolverhampton's Red Lion Street Station, football remained as important to Brookes as his work. Immediately in demand as a player with the West Midlands' police side, he went from assistant manager in 1976 to manager in 1984.

When he sends the side out at Hungerford, of the Diadora League, for a place in the quarter-finals of the FA Vase, Brookes's message will be ringing in his players' ears. "I scored a goal at Wembley for England schoolboys in

1957," he said. "It's every footballer's dream to play at Wembley. I will remind my players that this year will be their chance."

As champions of the Influential Midland Combination, the West Midlands' police team was denied promotion to the Beazer Homes League because its ground, near Edgbaston cricket ground, has no floodlights. The side, however, reaps the benefit of an unusually settled line-up, with eight of the squad having worked with Brookes since being police cadets.

The Metropolitan Police of the Diadora League, are also still in the competition, at home to Diss at Imber Court. "We've met in the National Police Cup for the past three years and beaten them each time," Brookes said. "It will be nice to walk out at Wembley with them. I don't know who'd police that one."

TABLE TENNIS

Syed moves forward

MATTHEW Syed gained one of the most important wins of his career to move nearer a Barcelona place when he beat the Steffen Fetzner, of Germany, in the Olympic qualifying competition in Bolzano, Italy, yesterday (Richard Eaton writes).

Syed, who was a late replacement, won 21-19, 11-21, 21-18, 23-21.

Lisa Lomas, Andrea Holc and Alison Gordon also qualified for the second stage but Alan Cooke lost to Qian Li.

BADMINTON

TORBAY: English national championships. Men's singles first round (15 unless stated): 65: P. Ashger, 66: Z. Zaiton, 67: J. Cook, M. Gamble, 68: J. Hargrett, 69: J. Hargrett, 70: J. Hargrett, 71: J. Hargrett, 72: J. Hargrett, 73: J. Hargrett, 74: J. Hargrett, 75: J. Hargrett, 76: J. Hargrett, 77: J. Hargrett, 78: J. Hargrett, 79: J. Hargrett, 80: J. Hargrett, 81: J. Hargrett, 82: J. Hargrett, 83: J. Hargrett, 84: J. Hargrett, 85: J. Hargrett, 86: J. Hargrett, 87: J. Hargrett, 88: J. Hargrett, 89: J. Hargrett, 90: J. Hargrett, 91: J. Hargrett, 92: J. Hargrett, 93: J. Hargrett, 94: J. Hargrett, 95: J. Hargrett, 96: J. Hargrett, 97: J. Hargrett, 98: J. Hargrett, 99: J. Hargrett, 100: J. Hargrett.

GOLF

HONOLULU: Hawaiian open tournament. Leading first round scores (15 unless stated): 65: P. Ashger, 66: Z. Zaiton, 67: J. Cook, M. Gamble, 68: J. Hargrett, 69: J. Hargrett, 70: J. Hargrett, 71: J. Hargrett, 72: J. Hargrett, 73: J. Hargrett, 74: J. Hargrett, 75: J. Hargrett, 76: J. Hargrett, 77: J. Hargrett, 78: J. Hargrett, 79: J. Hargrett, 80: J. Hargrett, 81: J. Hargrett, 82: J. Hargrett, 83: J. Hargrett, 84: J. Hargrett, 85: J. Hargrett, 86: J. Hargrett, 87: J. Hargrett, 88: J. Hargrett, 89: J. Hargrett, 90: J. Hargrett, 91: J. Hargrett, 92: J. Hargrett, 93: J. Hargrett, 94: J. Hargrett, 95: J. Hargrett, 96: J. Hargrett, 97: J. Hargrett, 98: J. Hargrett, 99: J. Hargrett, 100: J. Hargrett.

RACKETS

QUEEN'S CLUB, London: Lacoste British open championships. Quarter-finals: W. Boone vs N. Cripps, 15-14, 15-10, 15-8; South vs T. Weller, 15-4, 15-2, 15-2; H. Williams vs M. Nichols, 15-9, 15-9, 15-5; S. Hazzard vs T. Colclough, 15-6, 15-7, 10-15, 8-15, 15-5.

SQUASH RACKETS

KUWAIT: Liberation Cup. Second round: Jahangir Khan (Pak) vs A. Barakat (Egypt), 9-4, 9-2, 9-2; C. Bromie (Cen) vs A. Barakat (Kuwait), 9-2, 9-6, 9-4; M. Maclean (Scot) vs A. Khalifa (Egypt), 9-4, 9-2, 9-2; S. Frenck (Ger) vs A. Barakat (Kuwait), 9-3, 9-0, 9-3; R. Schaefer (Neth) vs D. Khan (Pak), 9-2, 9-2, 9-3, 4-6, 4-6; N. Hargrett (NZ) vs S. Suben (Kun), 9-1, 9-3, 9-1; J. Bonnet (Fr) vs A. Wager (Egypt), 9-5, 9-1, 9-5; C. Dittmer (Aust) vs A. A. Habib (Om), 9-0, 9-1, 9-0.

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): New York Knicks 102, Orlando Magic 95; Atlanta Hawks 123, Houston Magic 112; Charlotte Hornets 122, Golden State Warriors 113; Detroit Pistons 112, Cleveland Cavaliers 86; Washington Bullets 126, New York Knicks 108; Dallas Mavericks 98, Milwaukee Bucks 106; Denver Nuggets 97, Indiana Pacers 117; San Antonio Spurs 117, Utah Jazz 108.

CRICKET

SHEFFIELD SHIELD: Adelaide: Queensland 313 for 9 (M. Hayden 78, G. Raine 58), D. Hickley 4 for 89) vs South Australia. CAPE PROVINCE: Grahamstown: 112, 114; A. Hargrett (Pak) vs T. Hargrett (Pak), 11-1, 11-3; F. Galup (Surry) vs T. Hargrett (Pak), 12-1, 11-7; B. Hargrett (Pak) vs D. Hargrett (Pak), 11-3, 11-7; J. Wright (Sussex) vs W. Taylor (Surry), 12-10, 11-3; J. Bradbury (Oxon) vs L. Hargrett (Sussex), 11-4, 11-3; H. Hargrett (Sussex), 11-4, 11-2.

FOOTBALL

SPANISH CUP: Quarter-final, first leg: Real Madrid 2, Valencia 1. ASIAN CUP WINNERS' CHAMPIONSHIP: Final, second leg: Nissan Motor (Japan) 5, A. Hargrett (S. Africa) 6-1. OLYMPIC QUALIFIERS: South American qualifying round: Group B: Argentina 1, Chile 1; Ecuador 4, Bolivia 1. African play-off, first leg: Egypt 3, Zimbabwe 0.

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LE

Wasmeier gathers medal momentum

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

Val d'Isère: Markus Wasmeier has already laid down his challenge to the world champion, Franz Heinzer, and the other speed specialists for the blue ribbon event of the Olympic Games, the men's downhill, tomorrow. And after training yesterday, which he dominated for the second successive day, the message was clear: he is in gold medal form.

Wasmeier demonstrated that he is the early master of the Bellevalde piste, a dramatically twisting course created specially for tomorrow's race and ideally suited to the

German's technical skills. Heinzer, of Switzerland, who arrived in Val d'Isère the worthy favourite after winning four of this season's six downhill, kept plenty in reserve, standing up and slaloming through the finish of the 3,048-metre course.

The overall World Cup leader, Paul Accola, clinched his place in the Swiss quarter for the race with a rousing run, bettered only by Wasmeier, which thrust him into medal contention. Wasmeier clocked 1 min 51.18 sec to Accola's 1:51.84.

Practice times did not reveal a full picture as the world's best downhillers con-

tinued to familiarise themselves with a largely unfamiliar slope, but Wasmeier's broad smile told a tale of confidence. "I think it will be better on Sunday," the giant slalom world champion in 1985 said.

Accola, who achieved his best downhill result in Germany in January when he finished ninth behind the winner, Wasmeier, in Garmisch-Partenkirchen, proved himself a genuine contender on this track, which the pursues do not consider a real downhill.

His performance, achieved on super-giant slalom skis, secured his team place along-

side Heinzer and Daniel Mahrer, leaving the more established downhillers, William Besse and Xavier Gigandet, to duel for the last vacancy today.

Wasmeier, whose win in Garmisch was his first downhill triumph in five years, is in form. He was second in a downhill in Wengen and third in a giant slalom in St Gervais during the lead-up to the Games. "I want to think about it as little as possible and do nothing different from what I'm doing in training," he said.

Heinzer contented himself with fourteenth place, 2.24 seconds adrift of Wasmeier,

as he patiently prepared his challenge for the last: the missing from his downhill collection.

Lasse Arnesen strengthened his bid to earn Norway's first Olympic Alpine skiing medal in 40 years with the third-fastest time, 1:51.69.

LEADING PRACTICE TIMES: 1. M Wasmeier (Ger), 1 min 51.18 sec; 2. P Accola (Swi), 1:51.84; 3. L Arnesen (Nor), 1:51.69; 4. P Gigandet (Fra), 1:52.22; 5. G Mahrer (Ger), 1:52.85; 6. J E Thoren (Nor), 1:53.02; 7. D Mahrer (Ger), 1:53.16; 8. F Heinzer (Sui), 1:53.41; 9. F Mahrer (Ger), 1:53.42; 10. G Mahrer (Ger), 1:53.43; 11. F Heinzer (Sui), 1:53.44; 12. W Besse (Fra), 1:53.45; 13. D Mahrer (Ger), 1:53.46; 14. F Heinzer (Sui), 1:53.47; 15. G Mahrer (Ger), 1:53.48; 16. J E Thoren (Nor), 1:53.49; 17. D Mahrer (Ger), 1:53.50; 18. F Heinzer (Sui), 1:53.51; 19. G Mahrer (Ger), 1:53.52; 20. D Mahrer (Ger), 1:53.53; 21. F Heinzer (Sui), 1:53.54; 22. G Mahrer (Ger), 1:53.55; 23. D Mahrer (Ger), 1:53.56; 24. F Heinzer (Sui), 1:53.57; 25. G Mahrer (Ger), 1:53.58; 26. D Mahrer (Ger), 1:53.59; 27. F Heinzer (Sui), 1:53.60; 28. G Mahrer (Ger), 1:53.61; 29. D Mahrer (Ger), 1:53.62; 30. F Heinzer (Sui), 1:53.63; 31. G Mahrer (Ger), 1:53.64; 32. D Mahrer (Ger), 1:53.65; 33. 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WEEKEND TIMES

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Floating in the air: Kirstie Marsh goes into spectacular action in the aerial element of the freestyle skiing contest, a single spectacular somersault from a specially prepared jump. Britain's Jilly Curry is tipped for a freestyle gold

Head over heels in love with danger

They leap 15 metres into the air, turn a triple somersault with two twists before landing — and the whole ballistic performance is over in less than ten seconds. "It is," says Jilly Curry, whose spectacular performance on skis could bring a gold medal back to Britain, "hard to find anything that gives you such a buzz."

It is equally difficult to imagine anything that looks so gravity-defying and graceful being achieved by someone with two long planks attached to her feet. But such is the result of a combination of sporting enthusiasm, gymnastic precision and hours of practice on the lawn in the back garden. This is where 30-year-old Curry, the daughter of an Olympic steeplechaser from Dunsfold, Surrey, now one of the world's top women freestyle skiers, once suffered a rare injury: she broke an ankle when she fell over her ski poles.

Today the sixteenth Winter Olympics begin in Albertville, in the Savoie region of France, and Curry will be up there somewhere, sailing through the air with the grace of ease. The image of freestyle skiing as a serious sport has not been enhanced by having a two-minute balletic routine set to music. Like the risible synchronised swimming included in its triple discipline, but the other two elements — aerials, a single spectacular somersault from a specially prepared jump, and moguls, a 250m descent over a bumpy course including two upright jumps — are dangerous and breathtaking enough to attract even the most serious sportsman and dedicated spectator.

There was a time, not so many Olympics ago, when winter athletics events that looked remotely artistic were derided as sissy sports. It was John Curry who transformed the way ice skating was perceived with his revolutionary routine during the 1976 Innsbruck Olympics. Poetry in motion combined with stupendous courage: the image problem was melting.

By the time Torvill and Dean were acclaimed for their skill as

Tomba la Bomba, Jilly Curry, the Duchesnays... who will be the heroes of the sixteenth Winter Olympics, opening today in Albertville? David Powell goes cold-weather star-gazing

well as their entertainment value, ice skating had become an OK sport. The music they made together created a sensation around the world, not just because of the sexual chemistry there seemed to be between them — a product of their audiences' collective romantic imagination, as it turned out — but also because they were so demonstrably masters of their art. Their split-second timing, their superb body control and their fearless triple toe loops across yards of ice were as carefully planned and professionally executed as any motor racer's turn into a hairpin bend or footballer's precisely placed penalty.

This year Christopher Dean will be behind the ice scenes, choreographing for his wife Isabelle Duchesnay and her brother, Paul. Although they were brought up in Canada, train in Germany and are coached by an exiled Czech, the French hosts are praying they will win an Olympic crown to add to the world title they brought home for France last year.

As crowd-pullers the Duchesnays have already proved their potential: they once danced a tribute to the Brazilian jungle clad in skimpy suede outfits. Never mind the figure skating, watch the frocks. Dean has created a new dance based on the overture to *West Side Story* for his real-life love, but critics who saw it at a New Year gala said it did not move them as Ravel's *Bolero* once did.

Most Winter Olympics produce a star act. Torvill and Dean set the ice alight in 1984. Earlier, in the 1960s, the hero was Jean-Claude Killy, skiing's first millionaire after he won three golds in Grenoble. When will such a feat be repeated? Probably never, they say.

The former leading man is now in the director's chair, as joint president of the organising committee. Killy's games will be the biggest show on snow, 1,500 competitors, half a million specta-

tors, a winter holiday brochure heaving to life.

So who will be this year's star? One of the daring downhill demons? These are the young men who do not flinch at trying to tame the mountain with speeds up to 80 miles an hour. From a standing start they catapult down a white wall of snow that falls away at a 63-degree angle, and within 20 seconds are hitting the G-force. In the Olympics, speed is literally a life or death affair.

Switzerland's Paul Accola could be the man who, in a flurry of snow flakes, skids into our consciousness. Competing against the laws of nature is the name of the games, and Accola has won the most accolades so far.

One or two other Brits might come good. Wilf O'Reilly is hot on ice too, but his skill is not so much grace as agility and incredible speed. He is competing for the short-track speed gold, an event granted full Olympic medal status only this year. He is expected to win the 500 and 1,000 metres, circling the ice rink at 30mph, balancing on two 16in cutting edges. He can pass an opponent on a bend in a tenth of a second. Blink and you miss it.

One name already on everyone's lips in Albertville, a new Alpine village built over a period of ten years at a cost of £1.7 billion, is Alberto Tomba — Tomba la Bomba. A 6ft, 15-stone Italian invariably accompanied by a woman or two, and not often the same one or two, he is the playboy and pin-up of the travelling white circus, which is what World Cup skiing, as it moves from one resort to the next, is called.

Despite his macho image, the reigning world slalom champion has been called a "mummy's boy", because he is sticking to the safer world of slalom rather than tackling the so-called "real men's

events" such as the downhill and the super-G. It frustrates the cognoscenti that he does not broaden his canvas. They say he could be another Killy, but he trails in second place in the World Cup overall ratings, behind Accola, who is numero uno because he competes in more races.

Rumour has it that his reluctance to risk his neck is because Mama Tomba begs him not to. So he capitulates? An unlikely story. His supporters say he just wants to make sure he has two Olympic gold medals in the bag and he would be a fool to take any chances — and he's no fool.

"Maybe they will change the name to Albertville if I win," he says. For comments such as these, the circuit is grateful. His impish ways break the mould of the normally uncommunicative lo-men. Italians travel in their thousands into the mountains to follow him. After winning he rewards their homage by whirling his poles overhead and kneeling before his admirers, who thrust their hands through the fence at the winning line to touch him.

La Bomba appears in newspapers posing with the Pope, the president of the republic, and entrants in the Miss Italy contest, and they call him "the smiling man". He can afford to smile. His estimated earnings in 1990 were £2 million — and he skied badly that year. Why? He swapped success for excess. Hedonism ruled. He ate, drank and danced, but now he is back at fighting weight and is World Cup slalom champion. "When I want to relax," he says now, "I prefer to go out with friends or drive around in my Mercedes."

Tomba is the son of a millionaire industrialist, but in the Alpine countries family wealth is not a prerequisite of success. Vreni Schneider, Tomba's opposite number at the last Olympics,

winning the women's slalom and giant slalom, is the daughter of a Swiss shoemaker. Petra Kronberger's father is a cement truck driver, and Kronberger is the world downhill champion.

While Tomba has acquired from skiing a wealth probably more fabulous than his millionaire father's, and the World Cup overall champion, Marc Girardell, flies his own helicopter from race to race, the riches from winter sport are reserved for the few. What has Ronald Duncan, Britain's best downhill racer, got to show for a 5in scar on his buttock after an accident in which he nearly lost a leg? "Home is a room in Clapham, not big enough for my bed and my skiing equipment," he says. So he sleeps on a foldaway mattress on the floor.

A small sacrifice, presumably, for the chance to après-ski nightly? "Despite the illusion of glamour, drinking, girls and partying around the circuit, it is not like that. If you do that you will lose, and I do not feel like risking my life for a party."

This season, just when he thought he had cracked the sponsorship barrier, luck deserted Duncan. Last winter he skied on a budget of £10,000 but was looking to double it. He was awarded £10,000 but, at the last count, he was still waiting: the money had been promised from a company with Maxwell connections.

Martin Bell, Britain's best-ever Olympic downhiller after his eighth place in Calgary four years ago, has grown accustomed to the unglamorous routine. He says: "In a typical week, we are competing on Saturday and Sunday, training and doing practice runs from Wednesday to Friday, competing on Saturday and Sunday and so on. Some of the Swiss or Austrian guys can manage the odd day at home but it is impossible for us."

The best skiers live a life of five-star hotels and sponsored everything. The clothes they wear are spectacular, far more fun than the comparatively dull outfits of the summer Olympics. And here

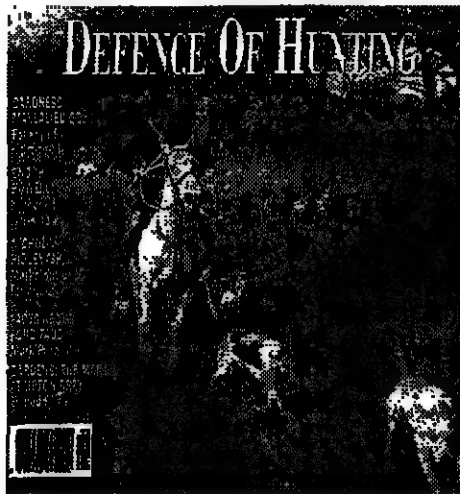
dressing for the part takes longer than the business. The downhill runner lasts but two minutes: putting on the brightly-coloured, skin-tight Lycra, the boots, the skis and the helmet is a fastidious process. It can take half an hour.

Then there is the mental preparation. As each skier awaits entry into the start hut, there is the visualisation routine: the rehearsal of the charge down. Franz

Heinzer, favourite for this year's Olympic downhill gold, goes through the process 20 times before each run. Kronberger four or five.

Winter Olympic athletes are the least superstitious of all sportsmen and women. As one of them pointed out, after a practice race which would make a black run seem like a slide down a snowdrift, luck has nothing to do with it.

Countryweek



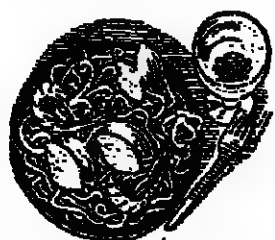
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SAY IT WITH...

Food and pink fizz for a St Valentine's day love-in from The Times cook, Frances Bissell, and Jane MacQuitty

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HIGH SOCIETY

In summer Snowdonia is crawling with tourists. But in winter, Robin Young discovers, it is desolate, raw and thrilling

Page 10



GLOBE-TROTTER

Kay Marles meets artist Richard Walker, whose travels inspired a mural on four-year-old Seth Royston's bedroom wall

Page 15

☐ Television: Lynne Truss turns on to a good read Page 3 ☐ Out of Town: a water vole's-eye view of a disappearing world Page 9 ☐ My Perfect Weekend by A.L. Rowse Page 13

FILM

BLACK ROBE (15): Seventeenth century Jesuit (Lothaire Bluteau) tries to convert Indians in northern Quebec. Intelligent epic from Brian Moore's novel. Director, Bruce Beresford.

MGM TROADER (11): A 1934 Plaza (071-497 9999).

BLAME IT ON THE BELLBOY (12): Mistaken identities in Venice. Impersonal, machine-tooled, old-fashioned farce. With Dudley Moore, Richard Griffiths, Patsy Kensit. Writer-director, Mark Herman.

CANNONS: Chelsea (071-352 5095) Oxford Street (071-635 0310) Odeons: Kensington (0426 914865) West End (0426 915574) Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

BOUDU SAVED FROM DROWNING (PG): Welcome revival of Jean Renoir's anarchic pastiche (1932), with Michel Simon as the unregenerate tramp clasped to the bourgeois bosom. Plus Jean Vigo's surreal view of school days. *26th de coudette (U)* Renoir (071-837 8402).

COUPE DE VILLE (12): Three warring brothers travel cross-country in a 1954 Cadillac. Breezy blend of road movie, male-bonding comedy, and 1960s nostalgia. With Patrick Dempsey, Amy Grant, Daniel Stern; director, Joe Roth.

CANNONS: Fulham Road (071-370 2636) Panton Street (071-690 0631).

DEATH IN BRUNSWICK (15): Sam Neill as an ageing mother's boy sucked into love, violence and accidental murder. Tasty black comedy from new Australian director John Rume.

CANNONS: Tottenham Court Road (071-636 6148) Metre (071-437 0757).



Sam Neill plays a mother's boy in *Death in Brunswick*

DELICATESSEN (15): French video whizzkids Juliet and Caro's wonderfully bizarre fantasy about a household of tenants living above a cannibalistic butcher. With Dominique Pinon, Marie-Laure Dougnac.

CANNONS: Chelsea (071-352 5095) Tottenham Court Road (071-636 6148) Gate (071-727 4043) Metre (071-437 0757) Screen on the Hill (071-435 3366).

DOUBLE IMPACT (18): Jean-Claude Van Damme, the "muscles

from Brussels", as two twin brothers righting wrongs in Hong Kong. Lame action movie. Director, Sheldon Lettich.

ODEON MARBLE ARCH (0426 914501) Plaza (071-497 9999).

FOR THE BOYS (15): Song-and-dance team entertain troops in three wars, only to be ruined by a synthetic script. With Bette Midler, James Caan; director, Mark Rydell.

CANNONS: Parkway (071-257 7034) Odeons: Kensington (0426 914865) West End (0426 915574) Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

FRANKIE AND JOHNNY (15): Short-order cook (Al Pacino) courts a wary waitress (Michelle Pfeiffer). Synthetic adaptation of Terrence McNally's play. Director, Garry Marshall.

CANNONS: Baker Street (071-935 9772) Fulham Road (071-370 2636) Empire (071-497 9999) MGM TROADER (071-497 9999) Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

HORS LA VIE (15): Masterly account of a French hostage's life in the turmoil of Beirut. Starring Hippolyte Girardot; director, Maroun Bagdad.

CANNONS: Tottenham Court Road (071-636 6148) Screen on Baker Street (071-935 9772).

JFK (15): Oliver Stone's contentious, electrifying, three-hour drama about the Kennedy assassination. Kevin Costner as crusading D.A. Jim Garrison; a bustling supporting cast. *Barbican (071-636 6881) Camden Parkway (071-257 7034) Cannon Fulham Road (071-370 2636) Empire (071-497 9999) Notting Hill Coronet (071-727 5705) MGM TROADER (071-497 9999) Screen on the Green (071-226 3520) Whiteleys (071-792 3332).*

LITTLE MAN TATE (PG): How and how not to rear a child prodigy. An engaging young player (Adam Hann-Bryd) and sensible direction (Jodie Foster) easily offset the facile moments.

CANNONS: Chelsea (071-352 5095) Odeons: Haymarket (0426 915533) Kensington (0426 914865) Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

MY GIRL (PG): Teeth-grating blend of pre-teen angst and middle-aged romance. Macaulay Culkin gets his first kiss. With Anne Clutton, Dan Aykroyd, Jamie Lee Curtis. Director, Howard Zieff.

CANNONS: Baker Street (071-935 9772) Chelsea (071-352 5095) Odeons: Kensington (0426 914865) Leicester Square (0426 915533) Whiteleys (071-792 3332).

THE PLEASURE PRINCIPLE (18): Tangled affairs of a philandering journalist (Peter Firth). Flawed comedy that seems left over from the Swinging Sixties. Writer-director David Cohen.

CANNONS: Fulham Road (071-370 2636) Oxford Street (071-636 6148) Piccadilly (071-437 3561).

URGA (PG): Nikita Mikhalkov's mesmerizing film about civilization encroaching on the Mongolian steppes. The top prize-winner at last year's Venice Film Festival.

CANNONS: Mayfair (071-405 8855).

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BECKETT: Riveting performance from Derek Jacobi and Robert Lindsay in Anouilh's play on the relationship between Thomas & Becket and Henry II. Theatre Royal, Haymarket, SW1 (071-630 8000). Mon-Sat, 7.30pm, male Wed, Sat, 8pm.

DAMIAN JONES: Oscar Hammerstein II's version of Bizet's opera, set in 1942. Reports hint that the cast is sometimes missing. Old Vic, Waterloo Road, SE1 (071-636 6148). Mon-Sat, 7.45pm, male Wed, Sat, 8pm.

AN ISLAND: Four singers, two pianists in a beautiful tribute to Cole Porter's wit and wry melodies. *Vaudeville, The Strand, WC2 (071-636 9987).* Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, Sat, 8.30pm, male Wed, 2.30pm, Sat, 5.30pm.

TALKING HEADS: Patricia Routledge and Alan Bennett excellent in three of his monologues charting the unconscious humour and pain of desolate lives. *Comedy, Panton Street, SW1 (071-637 1045).* Mon-Sat, 8pm, male Wed, 3pm, Sat, 4pm.

A TRIBUTE TO THE BLUES: Twelve singer-dancers whirl through the music of Duke Ellington. *Obvious routines cannot disguise the true ruffian Duke. Globe, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (071-484 5055).* Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 8.30pm, male Wed, 3pm, Sat, 5.30pm.

BRISTOL: Touring multi-media company Second Stride put the Queen of Scots in a modern setting with a *Widow's* electronic score from Palle Sellem. Could be astonishing. *Amotif, 16 Narrow Quay (071-222 2321).* Wed-Sat, 8pm.

DANCING AT LUGHNASSA: Brian Friel's Olivier Award-winning memory-play, set in 1950s Donegal. *Garrick, Charing Cross Road, WC2 (071-494 5055).* Mon-Sat, 8pm, male Wed, 3pm, Sat, 4pm.

DEATH AND THE MAIDEN: Juliet Stevenson, Bill Paterson and Michael Byrne in West End transfer of Ariel Dorfman's exceptionally powerful play concerned with the trauma of torture. *Best play of 1991. Duke of York's, St Martin's Lane, WC2 (071-436 5122).* Previews from Tues-Sat, 8pm.

FAITH HEALER: Stirling performance in Brian Friel's early play (four monologues) exploring a healer's doubts and sporadic powers. *Royal Court, Sloane Square, SW1 (071-730 1745).* Mon-Sat, 8pm, male Wed, 3pm, Sat, 4pm.

FROM A JACK TO A KING: Believe it or not, yet another compilation of rock 'n' roll hits, this time pegged onto the story of Macbeth (pop singer Eric Glavin becomes Thane Cawdor). *Return to the Forbidden Planet, Boulevard, Walkers Court, off Brewer Street, W1 (071-437 2661).* Previews from Mon-Wed, 8.15pm. Opens Thurs, 7.15pm. Then Mon-Sat, 8.15pm, late show Fri, 10pm, male Sat, 8pm.

GOOD ROCKIN' TONITE: Satisfying musical celebrating Fifties and Sixties pop classics. *Strand, Aldwych, WC2 (071-240 0300).* Mon-Thurs, 8pm, Fri, Sat, 5.30pm and 8.30pm.

THE MADNESS OF GEORGE: Ill-fated Hawthorne is very fine as a stricken king, but as a whole, Alan Bennett's play does not quite work. *National (Lyttelton), South Bank, London SE1 (071-928 2252).* Thurs-Sat, 7.30pm, male next Sat, 2.15pm.

THE MASTER AND MARGARITA: With the Devil and his cat stalking around

Mooscow, Bulgakov's fantastic sprawling novel poses problems for the adaptor. But the show is staged with great energy and manages to hold the audience's attention without flagging. Barbican Arts Centre, Old Town Hall, Lavender Hill, SW11 (071-233 2223). Tue-Sat, 7.30pm, Sun 6.00pm.

PAINTING CHURCHES: Sir Philip (excellent) and Leslie Phillips add elderly Boston couple, Josie Lawrence their artistic daughter in a quality touching family play. *Playhouse, Northumberland Avenue, WC2 (071-939 4401).* Mon-Sat, 8pm, male Wed, Sat, 3pm.

SOPHISTICATED LADIES: Twelve singer-dancers whirl through the music of Duke Ellington. *Obvious routines cannot disguise the true ruffian Duke. Globe, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (071-484 5055).* Mon-Fri, 8pm, Sat, 8.30pm, male Wed, 3pm, Sat, 5.30pm.

AN ISLAND: Four singers, two pianists in a beautiful tribute to Cole Porter's wit and wry melodies. *Vaudeville, The Strand, WC2 (071-636 9987).* Mon-Fri, 7.30pm, Sat, 8.30pm, male Wed, 2.30pm, Sat, 5.30pm.

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Dundee (0882 205113/08 0882 20524), Wed, 7.30pm. *Usher Hall, Edinburgh (01-226 1155/08 031-220 4349).* Fri, 7.30pm. *Concert Hall, Glasgow (041-227 5511).* next Sat, 7.30pm.

OPERA
STREET SCENE: Kull Wall's *Street Scene*, half musical, half opera, returns to the English National Opera stage with Nicolette Molinar performing David Pountney's original production. Janice Cairns sings the role of Anna Maumant; Mark Richardson is her brutal husband Frank and Lesley Garrett their daughter Rose. James Holmes conducts this tragedy of ordinary, beaten-down people. *Coventry, St Martin's Lane, London WC2 (071-936 3161).* cc 071-240 3235, Thurs 7.30pm.

JAZZ
JOHANNAN GEE TRIO: Accessible modern jazz from a threesome led by the winner of the "most promising newcomer

Actions speak louder than words

A red letter day, last Sunday, if ever there was one. *Songs of Praise* (BBC1) finally capitulated to an overwhelming audience demand, and started to display the words of the hymns on-screen. What a relief. They said that the requests had been flooding in (by way of proof, a shot of a pile of letters on different coloured notepaper), and that it was time to concede to common sense at last. No more must we rifle frantically at home through our old school hymn-books searching for "God is working His purpose out", locating it just when everyone in the congregation stops singing.

Well, I had to laugh, really. How I had laboured week after week over those handwritten letters — sloping the handwriting to fit and left, rummaging in desk drawers for old scraps of floral headed notepaper and dog-eared kingfisher notes. I had even resorted, in desperation, to composing one letter entirely out of words cut from *The Times*, pasted (all crooked) on a sheet of A4. It was probably this last missive that did the trick, come to think of it. But why didn't they pick up my "bouncing ball" suggestion? What a lost opportunity.

The issue of subtitles came up a few times this week — they seemed to be everywhere. "Just off to read some television," I quipped to the cats one evening (but they just gave me a blank look). For example, attempting to get on with some urgent knitting during Wednesday's *Bookmark* (BBC2) was a huge mistake, because every time I looked away from the telly to count the number of stitches I had dropped, a vital piece of information was silently flashed on screen (by way of commentary, and I missed it. Fortunately I guessed that the subtitles in Screen Two's *The Count of Solar* (BBC2) would be crucial (it concerned a deaf-mute boy, learning sign language), otherwise I might have sacrificed one of the few decent bits of telly to an inadequate impression of Madame Defarge.

What tricky blighters these subtitles are. Try watching a few hours of television with someone who needs the text captions, and just see how long you can stand it. Personally, I am banging my head on the carpet within half an hour. I was obliged to watch with text for a little while this week, and honestly started to wonder whether God had heard about the *Songs of Praise* scam and was subtly working his purpose out — by making me read every line of *Inspector Morse* before it was spoken. A plague of boils would be too lenient, evidently. To imagine the full irritation of the text

REVIEW
Subtitles
popped up
all over the
place this
week, but not
always helpfully.
Lynne Truss says

subtle, you must imagine sitting in a cinema and hearing every scene described in advance by a voice next to your ear. "This is the bit where he fires the gun," says the voice. "Bang!" goes the gun on-screen. "But it's all right; it turns out she's not dead," he says, at which the heroine opens her eyes.

Watching TV with the subtitles is slightly worse than this, actually. Because not only do the captions pre-empt the words coming out of people's mouths, they also represent them inaccurately. "Hello," says the caption as a man walks into a room. "Hi," says the actor. "Is that you, dear?" asks the wife, hurrying from the kitchen. "Hi," says the caption. It is incredibly irritating.

In this week's *Wildlife on One* (BBC1), the heroic life-cycle of a tiny innocuous fish called a eulachon was given a subtle change of nuance by the teletext subtitles, which described it throughout as a boogman. I suppose the fish doesn't care either way. But the viewer was left with the confused impression that the poor defenceless eulachon deserved its swingeing share of natural predators — whales, seals, eagles — because it had probably mis-spent its youth wrecking football trains across Europe.

As far as hard-of-hearing viewers are concerned, this all seems a bit of a swindle (though of course it's much better than nothing). As far as anybody else is concerned, the only answer is to obscure the lower part of the screen from view by crouching behind the sofa. This may seem extreme, but it is surprising how dramatic tension simply gives up the ghost once the viewer has prior knowledge of the dialogue.

In the context of all this literal-mindedness, the subtitles of David Nokes's play *The Count of Solar* were much to be welcomed. Based on a true story, it concerned a deaf-mute boy found wandering wild in France in the 1780s, and



Fingers talking: learning sign language raised the Count of Solar from urchin to aristocrat — just in time for the French Revolution

subsequently educated in sign by the saintly Abbé de l'Épée (David Calder in a wig). But no sooner could the boy express simple things such as "bread" and "hat" than he discovered a picture in a book that made him want to say something a great deal more complicated — viz. "This is a picture of my ancestral home. I am actually the Count of Solar, cruelly abandoned by a wicked lawyer (for some reason), and I intend to claim my inheritance." Language, we were told, is what separates man from beasts. In this boy's case, the immediate benefits of language were to raise him, potentially, from urchin to aristocrat. Just in time for the French Revolution. God was working his purpose out again.

It was an enigmatic story, shot very beautifully in pools of old-master yellow light (the director was Tristram-Powell), and very

nice. The question of the boy's identity was unresolvable, so was simply left unresolved. Merely to label this boy the Count of Solar might bestow wealth and power, but it would make no difference to his essential state: the real enigma was inside him, and was inseparable from his deafness.

The contrast between the world of legal certainties (all spoken) and the more poetic world of the emotions (all signed) was subtle but forceful. The point, surely, is that signing expresses a great deal more than words in the mouth; it appears to come from the soul. The accusation in court — "The boy is lying" — therefore seemed terribly shocking; how could the boy be lying, when he couldn't speak?

Last year, in a *Bookmark* programme about the deaf poet

David Wright, there was a heart-stopping sequence in which a woman sign-teacher recited Wordsworth's "I wandered lonely as a cloud" while simultaneously signing it. "Beside the lake, beneath the trees, fluttering and dancing in the breeze" sounds pretty nice on its own — but you should have seen it soar in this woman's hands. It was sublime. Similarly, *The Count of Solar* noticeably took flight in its most quiet, most non-verbal scenes — as when the boys at the Abbé's school said their prayers together, signing in unison. The film ended with a flashback to the Abbé conducting a comprehension test entirely in sign: "What is hope?" "Hope is the trust of the mind." "What is gratitude?" "Gratitude is the memory of the heart." Honestly, it loses a lot in the translation.

Talking of which, it would be neglectful not to mention here a

rather startling item on last Sunday's *Did You See?* (BBC2), which revealed that Americans require simultaneous translation while chuckling over old episodes of *Are You Being Served?* They sit scratching their heads, apparently, saying: "Did he say wide-fronts? Or wire-fronts?" — as though the answer (Y-fronts) would fill their lives with light. Why do they watch, then? It proved to be another enigma. Evidently the public service channel WLIW scores a huge hit with its Friday night "Brit-Com" evenings, yet nobody in its adoring audience can understand "knickers", let alone guess at the meaning of "more rabbit than Sainsbury's". Perhaps we should warn them about getting the teletext subtitles, however. If they don't understand "knickers", they might have a problem with "knockers" and "knackers" as well.

Back to the good old days

PREVIEW

TV Heaven

(Tonight, Channel 4, 8pm)

The only trouble with this new 13-week Channel 4 season of Saturday night "retro" programming is the estimated cost to each viewer who sets out to videotape it. My advice to all home archivists is: think about it now, don't start taping it and then be obliged to give up later on. Anyway, tonight's inaugural offering includes goodies from 1967, including Elsie Tanner's wedding to the swoony, uniformed American Steve in *Coronation Street* and an *Armchair Theatre* production featuring Edward Woodward as the cold-blooded and miserable hit-man, *Callan* (precursor to the *Callan* series).

Maigret

(Tomorrow, ITV, 8.45pm)

Michael Gambon steps into some rather old shoes, turns up his coat collar and promises not to light his pipe in a doorway. Funny how everyone is so reverent about the old Rupert Davies *Maigret* all of a sudden, when the only thing they remember about this 1960s series is the title sequence and the theme music. Critic Philip Furse once said that, in Davies's characterisation, Maigret would turn up at the murder scene not with the air of a policeman intent on solving the crime, but more in the manner of an insurance man intent on confirming the minutiae of the policy (see feature below). Famous fictional detectives now pack the schedules so tightly that you can hardly slip a dagger between them. But I wonder why somebody doesn't make a series based on the detective novels of Edmund Crispin, featuring the suave, witty, Oxford poetry professor Gervase Fen. Could it be that Crispin features too few Parisian prostitutes among his murder victims?

Wildlife on One: The Frankster

(Monday, BBC1, 8.30pm)

In Los Angeles, so I am told, people come out of their nice homes at sundown and call to their kids. But instead of calling the usual "here-puss-puss" kind of thing, they yell and bang drums and shout distractedly: "Oh my God, come quick! The coyotes are coming." The coyotes are coming, at which the cats streak back into the houses, wild-eyed and breathless, looking as though they have just been electrified. It's a hell of a way to carry on, but unfortunately it is dog-eat-cat out there. Monday's *Wildlife on One* confirms that the coyote (in common with the North American racoon, or the British urban fox) is a "successful" animal, and that American cities are teeming with coyote families, who stand around nonchalantly spitting out the identity tags and flea collars of much-loved pets. (I mentioned all this, by the way, to a cat-loving friend of mine, and though I hate to be alarmist, I got the distinct impression she will introduce the coyote to Crouch End.)

EastEnders

(Tuesday and Thursday, BBC1, 7.30pm)

This week, the characteristically unbearable dramatic tension builds to a "special" on Thursday, where the full half-hour is sustained by Pete, Kathy and Willmott-Brown (in various contrived combinations) thrashing out their feelings about the long-ago rape. It is strong stuff, and long to be missed. The only obvious problem is that, since the dramatic temperature customarily plummets whenever Willmott-Brown or Pete holds the stage, rather a heavy burden falls on Kathy — who is obliged to keep beating it up again. I begin to understand why she sometimes breaks down and sobs "Why me? Why me?". The strain of carrying these big scenes must be getting to her.

The Late Show

(Wednesday, BBC2, 11.15pm)

Arts programme audiences have grown restive in the last few months. People have started to question whether "culture" is quite as legitimate a subject as "art" — especially when it means half-hour celebrations of the Doc Marten boot. David Hare finally got so exasperated that he struck the board and cried "No more!", momentarily declaring on *The Late Show* that Keats just is greater than Bob Dylan. Is it ever too late to mend? What is to be done? *The Late Show* talks to lots of impassioned pundits (watch out for a fiery A.S. Byatt), and generally gnaws the bones of the old elitism debate.

L.T.

Too much naked truth?

Homosexual love-making is portrayed in a film on BBC2 tomorrow night

Despite the far greater public acceptance of homosexuals today, gays still have to face the agony of whether, and when, to tell their families about their sexuality.

The pain and repercussions of "coming out" are explored in a new film, *The Lost Language of Cranes*, directed by Nigel Finch, to be shown on BBC2 tomorrow evening at 10pm.

The film shows full-frontal shots of male nudity, and men kissing and making love, ironically the version for the United States, birthplace of the gay rights movement, had to be shot again with the men wearing boxer shorts.

Based on the book by David Leavitt, the American novelist, the screenplay has been scripted by Welsh director and writer Sean Mathias. He was commissioned by Ruth Caleb, the executive producer for BBC Wales, whose social dramas have tackled incest, child sexual abuse and Aids.

The Lost Language of Cranes centres on Owen, a married, middle-aged academic (played by Brian Cox) who haunts a gay porno cinema once a week unknown to his wife Rose (Eileen Atkins), a book editor. Owen is forced to confront his own homosexuality when his grown-up son Philip (Angus MacFadyen) tells his parents that he is gay.

Mr Mathias says he was 32 years old before he had the courage to tell his mother that he was gay, even though he had been living with a man for nine years. "The day I divulged the facts to my mother, the atmosphere in the room froze," he says.

In the film, Rose's cold reaction to her son's news is similar. "Keeping certain secrets is important to the general balance of life," she says tersely, getting up to make a cup of tea. But the truth, suppressed for so many years, tears the family apart.

"When you are talking about coming out, you are talking about leading your life as honestly as possible. Naturally there are elements you may destroy," Mr



Family affair: Brian Cox, Eileen Atkins and Angus MacFadyen

Mathias says. "At what point does lying and deceiving yourself and the people around you start to avert your true nature? That is the crucial issue."

The film raises other important issues, not least whether the BBC should be screening such a literally naked portrayal of gay sexual love. Last November *Saturday Night Out*, which reflected gay life, caused an avalanche of complaints, mainly in advance.

Alan Yentob, the controller of BBC2, says: "In my view this is the kind of piece that has a place on British television and should be judged on artistic merit, not in prurient anticipation of what the viewers suspect they may see."

Mary Whitehouse, the president of the National Viewers' and Listeners' Association, has not seen the film. But she reiterates that the BBC's charter carries an obligation not to transmit material that "offends against good taste and decency".

"I have never taken a position against homosexuals as people,"

she says. "What is done or discussed in private is quite different from what is shown on television. Nevertheless, six out of ten children have a TV set in their bedroom. Mother may kiss her children goodnight, but after she has gone, the possibility is that children switch on their televisions. Besides, when normality is not expressed by sexual experience between a man and a woman, we have the disintegration of the family."

This is not a view shared by the actor Sir Ian McKellen, who has become a crusader for gay rights. "My generation were taught to deny and repress themselves, and several gay friends got married, which only led to instability and unhappiness," McKellen says. "What is important to remember is that against the whole weight of society's desire one goes on being homosexual. I know how difficult it is to persuade somebody to change their sexuality. This film may help lonely lesbians and gays to be honest with themselves."

JUNE DUCAS

Gambling on Gambon

Best remembered for his pipe-lighting title sequence and for lighting Rupert Davies's subsequent character, the BBC *Maigret* of the early 1960s has until now (apart from a grotesque, false start featuring Richard Harris) deferred further attempts at televising Simonon.

But Granada TV has plucked up courage, drawn by the eldorado of creating a long-running detective series to rival *Poirot* and *Inspector Morse*, and done so. Writers of the calibre of Alan Plater and William Humble have adapted six of the Belgian author's 102 *Maigret* tales. Michael Gambon plays the star sleuth, and Budapest stands in for the rather shabby Paris of the 1950s.

Expensive drama series, particularly those with foreign locations, are usually filmed in the summer. But *Maigret* is not *Summer's Lease*. The typical Simonon novel requires the hero to tramp about in a dingy *arrondissement* where it is always raining.

Granada's solution, in the 90-minute pilot episode (Sunday, ITV, 8.45pm), is to pick an untypical yarn set in a torrid July — so torrid that it turns *Maigret*, normally a wine and brandy man, into a beer-drinker. (The series has duly secured a £500,000 sponsorship deal from Kronenberg.)

The Patience of Maigret has the chief inspector investigating the death of a wheelchair-bound Corsican crime boss, which is linked to a wave of raids on jewellers. The suspects live in the same apartment block as the victim.

The story is not only weakly plotted but also ill-suited to the role of prologue, as it fails adequately to establish and individualise *Maigret* and his three regular police colleagues.

Gambon has the character's monolithic imperturbability, but Simonon's spare, functional dialogue gives him little scope. The other classical actors in the cast —

The new *Maigret* on our screens tomorrow is far from true to Simonon's original

Cheryl Campbell, Greg Hicks, Geoffrey Hutchings — similarly struggle.

Plater also has language problems. Do you retain a French feel, risking comparisons with *Allô Allô*? Or anglicise Simonon, risking the inference that a team from *The Bill* has been seconded to the Quai des Orfèvres?

The script seems to fluctuate between the two approaches, with some exchanges in idiomatic English and others sounding like literal translations from French ("Am I permitted to give some advice?" asks one witness).

On the plus side, the domestic life of *Maigret* — an unusually happily-married fictional detective — is skilfully sketched in a few

scenes, with Claran Madden as the hero's wife. The diverse inhabitants of the apartment building are sharply characterised. And Budapest proves to be a very passable Paris, although the use of brief shots of Parisian tourist attractions is bewilderingly crude.

The BBC *Maigret* was made in black-and-white. The Granada series is, of course, in colour, and director James Cellan Jones brings to the pilot episode the visual flair so evident in his production of *Fortunes of War*. The effect, however, is to impose a nostalgic softness on Simonon's vision, subduing the ambivalence of his feelings about Paris.

He was a realist, not the enchanted chronicler of a vanishing pre-war city, and hence his work is best suited to black and white. Although it was tacky by present-day standards, the Rupert Davies version was arguably more faithful to the atmosphere of the novels.

JOHN DUGDALE

GUILTY SECRETS: NAIM ATTALLAH

"There are two things. I was addicted to *Bread* when it first came out, but I'm not so addicted now because they changed the original cast. It's not the same. But I am addicted to *Birds of a Feather*, which is about two sisters whose husbands are in prison. I like the relationship between them. I find it very amusing and very real. They are different and therefore complement one another. You feel that there is a bond there. Lesley Joseph, the neighbour, is slightly over the top. She over-acts, whereas the two sisters come across as being very natural."

ROSANNA GREENSTREET

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SUNDAY 8 MARCH at 7.30 pm

GREAT CLASSICS

CHAIKOVSKY: Capriccio Italien
RACHMANINOV: Piano Concerto No. 2
BIZET: Suite from Carmen
J. STRAUSS II: Blue Danube Waltz
RAVEL: Boléro

LONDON CONCERT ORCHESTRA
FRASER GOULDING conductor JAMES LISNEY piano

Box Office: 071-548 6362

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BASS: BRANDENBURG CONCERTO No. 3
HÄNDEL: MUSIC FOR THE ROYAL FIREWORKS
MOZART: CLARINET CONCERTO
VIVALDI: THE FOUR SEASONS

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POPULAR CLASSICS

NATIONAL SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
Conductor: ANTHONY INGLIS Violin: ERICH GRUENBERG
MADEIRA: THE WINDMILL
SWEET: VOLUNTARIOS
ELGAR: POMP & CIRCUMSTANCE No. 1
DUKAS: THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE
TCHAIKOVSKY: OVERTURE 1812
WITH CANNON AND MORTAR EFFECTS

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SATURDAY 14 MARCH at 7.45

GREAT CLASSICS

LONDON FESTIVAL ORCHESTRA
Conductor: ROSS POOLE Piano: MARTIN JONES
MOZART: THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO
MOZART: PIANO CONCERTO
CHAIKOVSKY: SYMPHONY No. 5
TCHAIKOVSKY: SUITE THE MUCKLECKERS

Box Office: 071-438 8891

at the **ROYAL ALBERT HALL**

SUNDAY 1 MARCH at 7.30

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MADAME SARGENT FESTIVAL CHORUS
Conductor: DAVID COLEMAN

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Seal is set on his success

Nominated for three of next week's Brits awards, rock star Seal has only one album and one tour to his name. David Sinclair investigates his appeal

Thirty seconds into our conversation, Seal's mobile phone rings. The call is from Brazil, where Seal has just performed at two stadiums in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. The news is that his song "Killer" has been the most played record on Brazilian radio this week. "When's the carnival?" Seal asks airily as the conversation nears its end. "I'll see you there."

Less than two years ago, Seal was still living in a London squat. For a young man — well, 29 later this month — suddenly to have the world at his feet must be a strange feeling. No less disconcerting must be the experience of receiving the kind of acclaim that has landed him three nominations for next week's Brits awards: Best Album by a British Artist (his self-titled debut), Best British Newcomer and Best British Male Artist. Other nominees in the latter category include Elton John, George Michael, Phil Collins and Van Morrison.

"It's hilarious, I know," he says easily. "I find it flattering to be compared to them, but in reality I know it's not like that. Those guys have a whole back catalogue that indicates their greatness. I've made one album and done one successful tour."

This is true. Yet in that short space of time Seal has demonstrated a rare ability to transcend the factional divisions of modern popular music culture. He made his mark initially on the techno-house club scene, thanks to his alliance with keyboard boffin Adam Smith which produced the UK No 1 hit "Killer".

His album, produced by Trevor Horn, married soul and synthesizer in a nouveau-progressive setting, while his live shows revealed the traditional rock 'n' roll sensibility

that was beating at the heart of his work all along. His tastes in other people's music are no less catholic, ranging from the pop of Bryan Adams ("Everything I Do I Do It For You") — "a classic song, one to rank alongside the Motown greats" — to the lunatic avant-garde indulgences of Fishbone.

A great many Britons first became aware of Seal when he appeared on the cover of the *Rolling Stone* magazine, astride, glowering down from billboard hoardings all around the country. If anything had gone wrong, this advertising broadside for his first album could quite easily have been branded the most outrageous hype. "I wouldn't have had the gall to suggest such a campaign myself," he says now, "although I sincerely believed that I had what was required to substantiate that amount of promotion."

His real-life presence is not a lot different from that imposing image. Standing six foot four and weighing 14 stone, he is dressed in the inevitable black leather trousers when he arrives at his record company offices in Kensington. He wears a huge pair of sunglasses and carries a guitar.

He conforms to the theory that very tall men are not as pushy as their shorter brethren, and although he is plainly confident of his abilities and aware of his worth, Seal's unusually sensitive personality has given him a dread of succumbing to the ego disorders that one routinely encounters among people who achieve this level of success.

"Fame is a cancer," he says with some passion. "It's a really poisonous thing, believe me. You don't realise it until you get here, but suddenly you see why there is that whole thing of sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll. It's so easy to fall into it. You're constantly

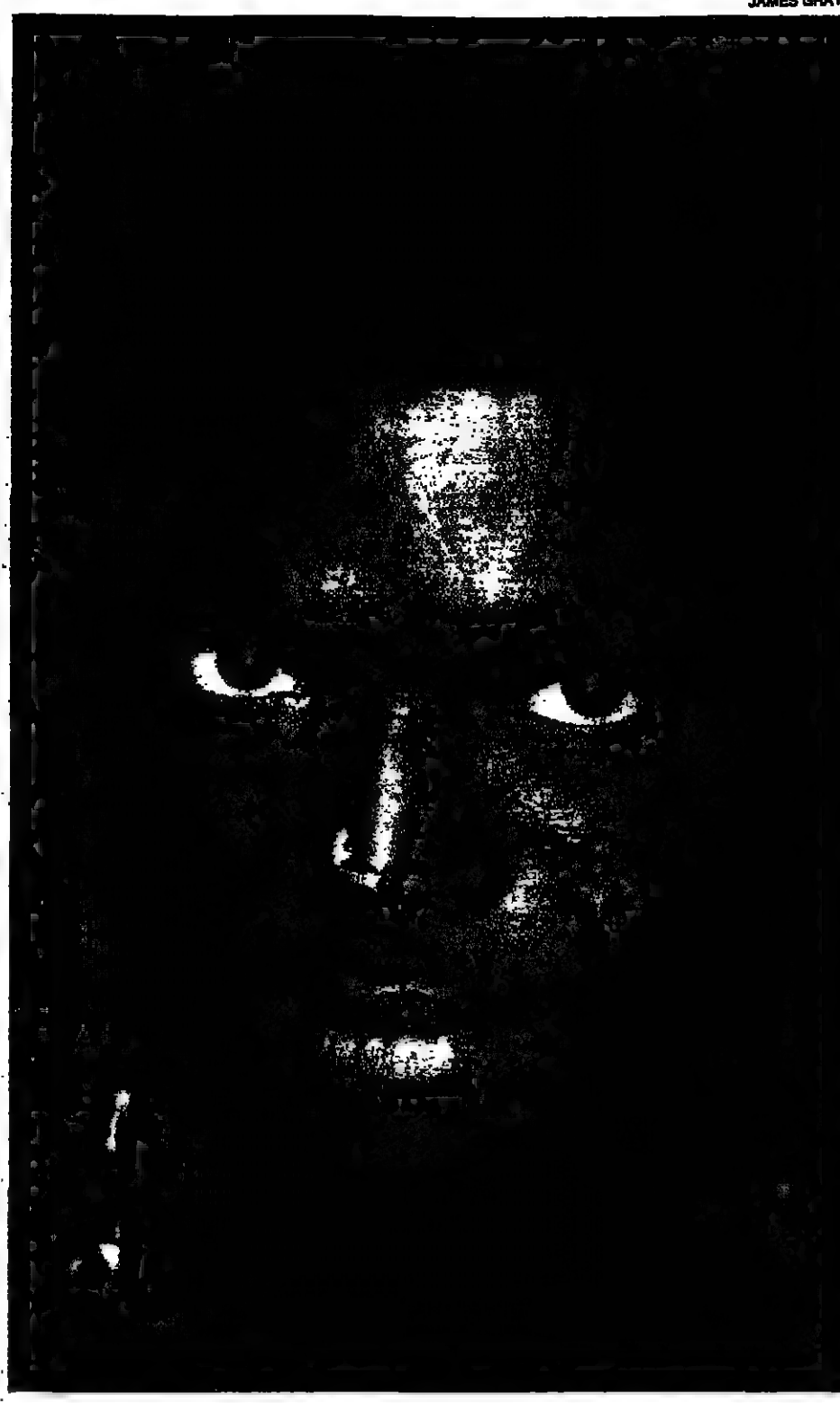
surrounded by people saying 'You're great Seal. You're right. Seal.' No matter how much of a sensible person you are, it becomes very easy to take advantage of situations and lose respect for people."

Seal has evolved various strategies to prevent this happening. One is to maintain an entourage of people who knew him before he was successful. His manager, John Wadlow, and his accountant, Julian Spicer, are people he met five years ago, when he first started writing and recording his demos on a portable studio in a bedroom at his mother's house in Kilburn. His record company advised him to get "proper" management, but Seal has stuck with the people he feels he can trust.

His personal assistant, who sits in for much of the interview, is a chap called Paul Inge whom Seal describes as "my best friend, someone who knew me and believed in me long before I had any money or success".

Seal's other tactic is to keep on the move. Born in Kilburn of Nigerian parents (and one Brazilian grandparent, an angle which the media went to town on during his visit to that country), he enjoyed a settled childhood in north London, but always longed to travel. He spent time in Thailand before he was successful, and returned there over Christmas with his girlfriend Sasha, and the ubiquitous Inge.

"We went to the extreme north, well off the tourist routes, and stayed with some hill tribes. Very few of them had ever seen black people before, much less anyone with dreadlocks hair like mine. So they were really apprehensive at first. Fortunately we had lots of sweets and food



Man of the moment: Seal has a rare ability to transcend rock's factional divisions

and things to offer them. My only mistake was that I didn't take my guitar with me."

This recollection triggers a sudden move towards the guitar case, and pulling out a well-worn acoustic he proceeds to play excerpts from six new songs which he has written for his next album. He plays the instrument left-handed and upside down, to a rudimentary standard, yet

using a repertoire of slightly odd chords and voicings. Among the numbers are a song inspired by the visit to Thailand, and a tribute to Joni Mitchell. Both have lots of jangly chords played high up the neck, and the impromptu performance pulls into focus a folk dimension to his music.

Of the several glittering prizes he has picked up so far,

Seal is most proud to have won the Ivor Novello award for writing "Killer". "I'm not a very good guitarist, and to tell you the truth I hardly ever sing in tune," he insists. "I'm a songwriter really, or at least that's what I aspire towards."

The Brit Awards will be at Hammermith Odeon on Wednesday at 4pm. The ceremony will be shown on BBC 1 later the same night, 7.30-9pm.

Rejoice, but don't force it

CONCERTS
Philharmonia/
Barshai
BBCSO/Lazarev
Festival Hall

WHETHER or not the coda of Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony depicts "forced rejoicing", as claimed by Solomon Volkov in the composer's putative "memoirs", remains a matter of perception, or perhaps of taste. It may well be the case, as some scholars have suggested, that such a reading arises from, or is at least fed by, cold war ideologies. Rudolf Barshai's impressive account with the Philharmonia on Wednesday demonstrated that the symphony's ending can sound insistent without a trace of cynicism: triumph without vacuity.

He achieved that partly with the steady, deliberate tempo he adopted for the coda, and partly by the skill with which he made it seem the logical consequence of what had gone before. The victory was indeed hard won, not an afterthought. Each of the previous movements had been equally convincing, with a succession of wind and brass solos negotiated by the respective members of an orchestra on superlative form.

In Beethoven's Piano Concerto No 1, Mikhail Pletnev was the cool, fastidious soloist. From his first entry he located the concerto firmly in its classical tradition, turning his phrases with a precision that bordered on severity. In the Largo he allowed himself a shade more expressive latitude — as indeed the music in the romantically remote key of A flat, positively demands — though it remained a reading characterised by emotional restraint. The final Rondo returned to the formal world of virtuoso display, and Pletnev seemed in his element, throwing off brilliant

passagework in expertly handled dialogue.

Earlier in the week, the BBC Symphony Orchestra under Alexander Lazarev offered late Strauss and early Mahler. That was a fascinating juxtaposition, since Strauss's Horn Concerto No 2 is not so far removed from Mahler's First Symphony in style. In spite of the half-century separating them.

The Strauss recalls the composer's youthful period, not only in its celebration of the eloquence of the horn — the instrument of his influential father — but also in the skill with which the woodwind choruses are balanced. That sensitivity had been evident from the Suite and Serenade for 13 wind instruments of the 1880s.

One was reminded of the subtlety of that wind writing, for the opulent string textures and soaring horn parts are almost taken for granted in Strauss. Not that the virtuosity of a horn player such as Radovan Vlastovic should be taken for granted. Particularly impressive was his ability to slip gracefully through the registers with a seamless legato, while unseathing a razor-sharp cutting edge for exuberant flourishes.

Neither in Strauss nor Mahler could the string playing be described as flawless, though the wind and brass solos were generally well taken. Under Lazarev's baton, a personal view of sorts gradually emerged in the Mahler: full-blooded playing at the climaxes, and a strong sense of irony in the funeral march, yet never quite taking the breath away.

At least, that was the case until the coda of the finale, which Lazarev made electrifying. Such an approach proved that the final triumph need sound no more hollow than that of Shostakovich.

BARRY MILLINGTON

Spinster blossoms in world of despair

BELOW Bob Crowley's shack-and-verandah set, with its corrugated-iron roof and dried-blood planks, a scrabbling and scratching is sometimes to be heard, perhaps a little more faintly than Tennessee Williams's text suggests he would have wished. An iguana is at the end of its tether and dreaming of escape. So, more figuratively, are several of the people above. So was Williams when he created them. Back in 1961, he was pouring booze and tranquillisers down his throat and regularly injecting a speed cocktail, prescribed by a quack doctor, into his raddled veins; and, unsurprisingly, the desperation showed in his work.

The time is 1940 and the place a last-chance hotel in the Mexican rain-forest. The only contented visitors are a troupe of holidaying Nazis, in Richard Eyre's production great pink blobs in black swim-suits. Their function is to celebrate the fire-bombing of London and generally to draw attention to the brutality of the world at large. But most of the other characters belong to what Williams called "my little company of the faded and frightened and difficult and odd and lonely".

Prime among them is Shannon, minister turned tour-guide. He has been disgraced for seducing a parishioner and then denouncing God's cruelties from his Virginia pulpit, and now, after an erotic brush with a 16-year-old, he is regarded as a sex-fiend by the grim ladies he is ineptly bussing through the outback. Like many of Williams's characters, like Williams himself, he is hopelessly split between the inarticulate cravings of the spirit and the pull of his flesh: a civil war in *propria persona*, and,

THEATRE
Night of the Iguana
Lyttelton

as such, quite a challenge for any actor. Richard Burton played the role in the movie, spilling dark sexuality and a sort of sullen danger from the screen. Anthony Hopkins and Brian Cox would be capable of suggesting the character's subterranean agonies today. At the National, Alfred Molina bangs his head against a post anxiously enough, rages forcefully enough, pleads for his disappearing job abjectly enough. But sexual power and charisma are missing. So is the sense that somewhere inside him a last-ditch battle is being waged against what is variously called his "spook" and his "blue devil". He is edgy, at times almost distraught; never in the despair Williams knew.

But his limitations are another's opportunity. In Eyre's revival, the character that quietly moves to the centre of the stage, and effortlessly commandeers it, is the New England spinster who has spent her life caring her grandfather, an inestimably aged poet, round the globe. As played by Eileen Atkins, with her long, fractured Modigliani-face, she manages to be as stringent without becoming austere, rigorous without being cold, grave but not sententious, precise but not severe, unsmiling yet outgoing and emotionally generous. Two of her moonlight confidences to Shannon make the production worth seeing in themselves. One involves a visit to the house of the dying in Shanghai, the other an encounter with a dowdy fetishist in Singapore.



Frances Barber: swaggering through life with fake-triumphant chorles of "ha!" she insists on seeing as a "love experience". The audience is rapt through both, entranced by their oddball magic.

Does this unbalance the production? I cannot think so. First of all, there is nothing wrong and much right with the supporting performances. Frances Barber might let up on her fake-triumphant chorles of "ha!" but she still has the casual, slouching sensuality the hotel-owner needs, and we can, if we wish, read a certain insouciance into her over-aggressive swagger. Second and more important, it is Atkins's Hannah who most completely embodies Williams's humane, forgiving wisdom.

She herself has plumbed the depths, seen the darkness, been down there with the roped iguana, and emerged with a hard-won charity, resilience and belief in endurance. "Nothing human disgusts me unless it is unkind or violent," she gently remarks; and at that point any doubts disappear. The play may be worthy, lacking in action, as some critics have claimed. The production may have its flaws. Both more than merit their place in our National Theatre.

Sponsor: Data General.

BENEDICT NIGHTINGALE

Fresh from Argentina

NEW MUSIC
Lontano/Martinez
St John's

THREE more new pieces from Lontano, and another three to come at its concert here next Tuesday. Odaline de la Martinez's energy is matched only by her dedication, and by the equal care and enthusiasm she gets from her players.

This time they began with something curiously between a duet and a trio in Alejandro Viñao's *Tumblers*. On stage were a marimba player and a violinist, but both with headphones, and from somewhere behind them the voice of a computer. Sometimes it was clear that this was a wobbly reflection of one or other of them, bouncing off and around the marimba line like a puppy on a lead, or caused by a decisive down-bow on

the violin to make a wonderful echoing metallic noise like some great door opening in a bank vault.

But sometimes it seemed to be going off on its own, and similarly there was a nice slipperiness between the instrumental parts, between effects of tumbling together and spins of solo acrobatics. The piece had other features typical of this composer's music: a feeling for sound as a substance, expressed in a gelatinous connection of events, and a rhythmic urgency that seems to come straight out of his South American background.

However, the work of another Argentinian, Michael Rosas Cobian, could hardly have been more different: cobweb music, a line of the most finely drawn instrumental skirmishes and jammed sonorities, and since it was over far sooner than its material seemed to be promising.

exquisitely conceived — but his is a completely other world of brushed pianissimos from piano and percussion, humming clouds and sharply focused but tiny chants from wind instruments. The danger would be that of seeming merely atmospheric: this is music that, for all its passivity, requires an acute wariness in the writing, and indeed in the performance. Here we were conducted just about safely, and with beautiful instrumental playing, to the end of the path.

Joe Cutler's *Epitaph for Nebula*, also for mixed ensemble, was not in danger of missing its destination, since its personality was so much more robust, even raw (a certain Varese-like feeling for instrumental skirmishes and jammed sonorities), and since it was over far sooner than its material seemed to be promising.

PAUL GRIFFITHS

Boring roaring

THEATRE
The Roaring Girl's
Hamlet
Croydon Warehouse

THE director of The Sphinx (formerly the Women's Theatre Group) asserts that because Shakespeare wrote only for men, incidentally creating characters who combined masculine and feminine elements, women should now have a go at playing all the roles. But having made the imaginative gender switch, Sue Parrish's direction offers no unexpected insight. Three hours of plodding adequacy are three very long hours indeed.

The play is put in context by a prologue written by Claire Luckham, of *Trafalgar* fame, spoken by Moll Cutler, Alexandra Mathie, convincing as the starchy swashbuckler, introduces us to her company of female reprobates and simply down-trodden wives and mothers.

She also plays Claudius. Since creating the lead in *Daisy Pulls It Off*, this actress has always had something of the good chap about her, and her usurping tyrant is a genial sort who strides around with his coiffure piled high and his skirt hitched up dashingly on one side.

The production disdains to mimic men: some of the male characters wear breeches, some skirts, some androgynous draperies. They all keep their feminine hairstyle.

With a producer whose ideas about the play extended further than making a sexual statement, there might be some good performances. Paradoxically, the female characters are the least convincing: an under-characterised Gertrude and a wooden, stilled Ophelia. We lose Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, for which relief much thanks, but have an Osric who recalls the young Margaret Rutherford.

Ruth Mitchell is the only player to summon up a semblance of passion. Her bitter teasing of Ophelia and her mounting excitement during the play scene, strike sparks. Good swordplay (Liz Kettle as Laertes comes remarkably to life).

MARTIN HOYLE

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THE SUNDAY TIMES Complete 7-day TV guide

Tomorrow, The Sunday Times launches a new 24-page section, Television and Radio, with complete listings of programmes on BBC1, BBC2, ITV, Channel 4 and satellite TV. This full-colour guide includes previews of the best films and programmes, plus interviews and features, for the seven days from Sunday to Saturday inclusive.

Over the hill, down the dale

Here's a reasonable third division idea which I offer to any publisher or producer who may be listening: a social, anthropological and literary history of Notting Hill, Notting Dale and their environs from circa 1950 until the present day. That is, from the time of the arrival of the first West Indian immigrants to the point where the area's fashionability has become so institutionalised that the action must be getting ready to move elsewhere (just as it moved from Chelsea in the 1970s).

Parochial? Sure. But what a parish, from the hanging gardens of Lansdowne and Elgin to the totter-squalor of Golborne, from the Mangrove to 192; from the walk-in, coin-in-the-slot dispenser of warmed-over gristle pies to Tom Courran's state of the art grocery. Then there are the race riots of 1958, the Trellick Tower, *Performance*, the Globe, the Prince of Wales on the far western boundary, the nutters, the crims, etc. Anyway, there you are. Yours for free.

The oldest surviving restaurants in this manor belong, predictably enough, to that period when the peeling palazzi started to get restyled and alarming pastel washes were applied to workmen's dwellings, and Rachman, asians, kippers under the floorboards and nasty surprises through the letterbox became (more or less) extinct apart, that is, from alsidians — though I'm still hoping.

I'm amazed that these outfits with their "characterful" interiors of Portobello gawags (mandatory rocking horse) and "characterful" house pets succeed in hanging on. But of course long-established places which own their freeholds or pay 1970 rents can sit pretty and get by on very little business, while newer and vastly better places still struggle, even though they may be permanently packed: witness the coming and going of archy fashion-conscious "cafes", bars, sn-distant brasseries etc over the past couple of years.

Not that all the newer places have been better than the old-timers, far from it. One that undoubtedly is, however, is L'Accento Italiano over in the far east, on the Bayswater border, beyond it maybe so far as the above prospectus is concerned — the site of the old Westbourne Grove Odeon marks where one quarter of London is succeeded by another.

None the less, it feels like Notting Hill. That is where the majority of the punters seem to come from. Enough of them



The rise of Notting Hill has peaked.

Jonathan Meades samples its charms

appear to know each other to give it the atmosphere of a properly local joint. It's animated, vaguely party-like and there is no house rule about not passing out: indeed one young man had his head on the table before his soup plate had arrived. Still, the clubbiness is not oppressive, it does not trespass into cliquishness; regulars — and though it is only a few months old there are plenty of them — do not get fawned upon to the detriment of first-timers, casuals and so on.

The service is particularly adept — the staff are not only amiable, they have the advantage of height: the bar and service station are raised to give them a clear view of beckoning diners.

This is a simple feature which might be advantageously taken up elsewhere. The room is pale sage, with a gently concave, suspended ceiling, a rough-cast wall the colour of wet sand, and wooden tables, each of which is equipped with a modish flask of herby olive oil.

This is a fashion which, with luck, will go beyond fashion and become a fixture of many outfits for years to come. It beats butter even if it does spot clothes. The rather cakey bread is superior to what you'd get in many places in Italy. So, in fact, is the cooking.

Like Al San Vincenzo near Marble Arch or Riva in Barnes, this is an establishment that is of much more than purely local interest. But book the bush telephone is efficient, word is out — I can't recall a restaurant in which I've seen so many non-reserved hopefuls being turned away.

The prices are right, but so they are in many other nearby places. The food is persistently laudless. The chef — who has not previously worked in London — is spot-on with everything he touches. And the menu includes such rarely seen items as tripe with borlotti beans and *coda alla vaccinara*, the ox tail dish that is pretty much peculiar to Rome — the meat is braised with, usually, tomato and, always, celery. I didn't try it, but if it's anywhere near as good as the tripe it is worth coming for. This stomach lining was exquisitely



tender, flavoured with a savoury tomato and parmesan sauce and given body by the beans.

Another meat dish was also top-notch: pork fillet with a piquant *agrodolce* sauce, roast cabbage, fried courgettes, fried potatoes. Before these were an exemplary risotto with squid ink and a strange but wholly successful concoction that comprised a base of fried, garlic-flavoured bread dough with a "topping" of thin, grilled courgettes and soft goat cheese. There are a number of promising sounding sweets. Fritters with raspberry purée were good.

The wine list is short and cheap, nothing over £15. The Grignolino grape which is, perhaps understandably, not much grown outside Piedmont makes for a thinish bevy and is not recommended. An Abbazia di Pro-

pezzano from somewhere down south is a much more worthwhile prospect. For those with a taste for such medicines there are numerous bitters such as Cynar and Averna.

The Brasserie du Marché Aux Poisses is not a brasserie, but it's otherwise fittingly named. It is at the far northern end of Portobello Road, where old-style Kenal trades such as burglary and flogging CD players in pubs still thrive. Not that you'll find any free enterprise buccaners in this pleasant cafe — it's not nearly flash enough to appeal to scallywags and rascals.

This cafe is simply furnished, slightly cramped, friendly and a happy utility for bargain hunters. (I imagine that everyone who lives in the area knows about it already.) The cooking is wholesome, homely and sustaining. A gratin of

potatoes, *trompette des morts* and cream would have been better had the tubers been peeled, but it was OK. Gnocchi with a cream sauce flavoured with (probably) sage was a nice heavy. Pork is pot-roasted with split peas and bacon lardons. Chicken is sauced with tarragon and cream. Both of these dishes were absolutely sound. The combination of low prices, lack of pretension and open-all-hours policy is a winning one.

L'Accento Italiano
16 Gurney Road, W2 (071-243 2201)
Lunch Mon to Fri, dinner Mon to Sat.
£25 plus. Set menu £35.

Brasserie du Marché aux Poisses
349 Portobello Road, W10 (081-968 5828)
Noon till midnight Mon to Sat. Lunch only on Sun. (Light breakfast every day) £44.

JONATHAN MEADES'S RESTAURANT GUIDE

Marks — up to a maximum of ten — are awarded for cooking and although they are intended to reflect value for money they are not determined by this consideration alone: certain very costly restaurants are very good, certain very cheap ones are too. All prices given are approximate — they are for a three-

course meal for two, including modest wine, and an aperitif. Dishes are mentioned only as an indication of the repertoire. Never be afraid to complain. Phone first: it is not only discourteous but illegal to dishonour bookings that goes for restaurants as well as customers.

HOTEL RESTAURANTS

LONDON

The Capital Hotel
8 Basil Street, SW3 (071-589 5171)
Polished and amiably run private hotel with decoratively over-egged dining room and increasingly splendid kitchen. The only problem for the unwary customer is likely to be the menu descriptions. Cassoulet, for instance, is no such thing — but it is good: rack of lamb with haricots in a tomato and olive oil sauce. Duck is stuffed with duck confit and topped with foie gras. Soufflés are impressive. Muller soup actually tastes of that fish. The wine list is justifiably celebrated as one of London's better ones. There is a tendency to augment dishes with luxury components that are not quite to the point, but otherwise the cooking is close to faultless. £120 (lunch £60). Lunch and dinner every day.

Celebrities
The Hampshire Hotel, Leicester Square, WC2 (071-839 9309)
The most unhappily situated hotel in London fortifies itself against encroachment with thick, rich curtains and unusually unobtrusive doors. The cooking is winningly un-hotel like. The chef, Colin Burton, is not much pre-occupied by fancy arrangements but delivers, instead, a number of quite remarkable downhome dishes — beef flank with anchovy sauce, rabbit mousse with basil sauce. The wines are too few and too expensive, but it's altogether an odd and laudable outfit with only a few rough edges to be smoothed. £100. Lunch and dinner every day.

CAFES

LONDON

The Underground Cafe
214 Camden High Street, NW1 (071-482 0010)
Congenial and prettily done-out north London basement with worthwhile cheap Italian wines and Italian "home cooking", which could benefit from a touch more precision. Pasta dishes are superior to chargrilled meats, which tend to be mistimed. Grilled veg are good. The more ambitious the dish the more likely it is that elementary mistakes will be apparent. The service is amiable. £40 plus. Lunch Sun, dinner Mon-Sat.

The Museum Street Cafe
47 Museum Street, WC1 (071-405 3211)
Tiny dining room, austere decor, limited but accomplished cooking, most of it chargrilled fish and white meat with pulses. The bread at this Bloomsbury cafe run by the chef-proprietor is as good as any in London. Soups are well made, sweets pleasant, cheeses English and unapologetic. That it's all desperately fashionable does not mean that it's not rather good. Unlicensed. £40. Lunch and dinner Mon-Fri.

OUT OF TOWN

Howard's House Hotel
Telford, Shropshire (0222 716382)
The village is a dream of the picturesque: steeply wooded hills, parkland, a lake, a surprisingly grand church and a romantically castellated manor house. The hotel occupies the former dower house. It is a delightful place, run by good people. The cooking is cautious, in deference to the clientele of retired army officers and their chess-playing wives. Paul Firmin is a superb craftsman and most of his dishes display a sure touch. Guinea fowl and quail are both stuffed. Mullet is served with rhubarb. Veal rump is perfectly roasted. The French wines are well chosen and ungreedily marked up. Good cheeses and delicious puddings. £60 plus. Lunch Sunday only, dinner every day.

Redmond's
Cleeve Hill, near Cheltenham, Gloucestershire (0242 672017)
A modest hotel high on the Cotswold escarpment between Cheltenham and Winchcombe. The views across the Severn valley to the Malverns are terrific and so is the cooking: assured, restrained, original and delicious. Skate fritter with ginger and lime butter sauce, beef fillet with garlic purée and parsley and mushroom sauce, chicken with vanilla and orange, goat cheese ravioli with tomato and garlic, hot banana soufflé, lemon tart with honey sauce. There are also commendable cheeses, and unusual wines from the "other" American states: £65-£70. Lunch: Tues-Fri and Sun. Dinner: Mon-Sat.

OUT OF TOWN

Adil
148-150 Stoney Lane, Sparkbrook, Birmingham 11 (021-449 0335)
A basic and excellent cafe specialising in a culinary idiom peculiar to Birmingham called *balti*. Dishes are served in wok-like vessels called *karahi*. The range of vegetables is extensive. There are also finely spiced meat, poultry and pulse compositions. The roasts and mains are as good as you'll find in Britain. No cullery. Drink lassi, finish with Kullfi. Lunch and dinner every day, £12.

The Stour Bay Cafe
39-41 High Street, Manningtree, Colchester, Essex (0206 396687)
A Californian woman chef comes to a north Essex town. This is a somewhat unlikely establishment but a commendable one. The chef, Sherri Singleton, trends between the Californian extremes of healthy asceticism and freeform gimmickery. Her cooking is well judged and substantial. Lamb with ginger crust and duck with wild rice pancakes are impressive. The puddings are first rate, the first courses aren't. The New World wine list is outstanding. £40 plus. Lunch Tues-Sun, dinner Tues-Sat.

KIND FOOD: ALISON JOHNSON

Another Maff gaffe

Vegetarian Diet is Bad for Women, the *Sunday Express* declared recently on John Gummer's behalf. When I phoned the press office at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (Maff) to find out what the minister had been up to, they explained he had not exactly said that.

But anyone who studies Mr Gummer's form will realise that, though misquoted, he had not been misunderstood. Meat-eating is an article of faith to our agriculture minister.

Perhaps he should have looked at evidence linking anaemia in adolescent girls to junk food and dieting, and osteoporosis to lack of exercise and excessive protein intake, before restating his vegetarian heresy hunt.

"This ministry is committed to the promotion of healthy eating. This is based on a balanced diet, which normally contains a proper amount of meat..."

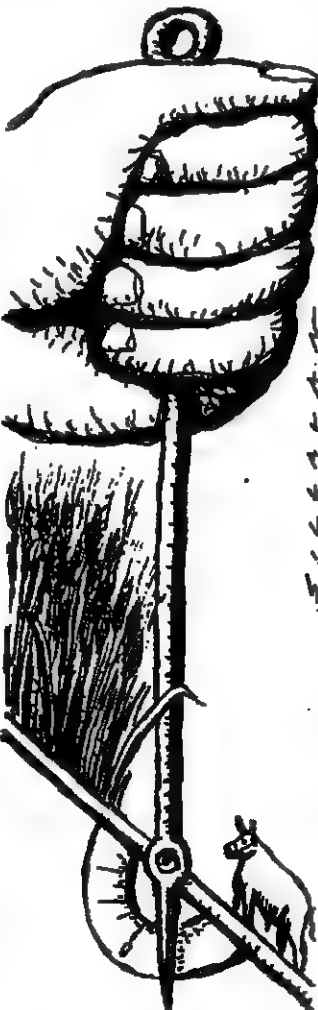
More often an improper amount of the same. Has nobody told Mr Gummer that the government's own health experts warn that 85 per cent of the population eats too much animal fat?

The World Health Organisation's recent report on diet, nutrition and the prevention of chronic diseases echoes the warning. "The same diet that helps prevent heart disease can also be beneficial for diet-related cancers, dental decay, arthritis, osteoporosis — and weight control," says Professor Philip James, the chairman of the committee which published the report. Gosh! Roast beef dinners don't seem to be the way forward at all.

Professor James was writing the foreword of *Eat for Life* Diet by Janette Marshall and Anne Heughan, a book that is based on the WHO's recommendations for a healthier diet.

As well as actual weight-loss diets, the book contains copious nutritional details, but the basic message is simple: eat carbohydrate foods such as bread, potatoes and pasta to make up more than half the daily calorie total; eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables every day; reduce saturated fats.

To achieve these ends, the authors recommend building meals by choosing the starchy



food first, then the vegetables, and lastly, more or less as a trimming, adding fish, meat, cheese or eggs in small quantities.

This is not modern crankery: it is what most of humanity has always done, and still does. The frugal Japanese or Scottish traditional diets of a grain food merely spiced with animal foods were immensely healthy. Such cultures turning to a meaty diet inevitably succumb to all the animal fat-related health problems so familiar here today.

Famines and malnutrition are not caused by insufficient animal foods, but by insufficient calories.

They might be more sufficient round the globe were it not for the rich nations' insistence on huge amounts of animal protein, particularly beef, produced by wasting up to 90 per cent of the

food value of vegetable sources in rearing the carcass. On that ground, as well as on that of kindness to animals, vegetarianism is morally convincing; but nobody who saw the recent BBC programme on ravishing chimpanzees tearing a monkey to pieces could maintain that we are by nature totally vegetarian.

Chimps share 98 per cent of our genes and there is no doubt at all that they drool for meat. Just like Mr Gummer. Given the chance, they might suit it every day; but would it be good for them? They can do without animal protein, though they regard meat as a great treat.

If we looked at it in that light, we would not expect meat and other animal-derived foods to be cheap basics: so factory farms mass-producing an inferior product would be unnecessary. That would have untold benefits for animal welfare. According to the WHO it would also be pretty good for our hearts, bowels, joints and waistlines.

The recipes in *Eat for Life* are quick and simple as well as healthy.

A chimp would love Fruit Parcels (apricot, pineapple and apple baked in mango juice), or carrot and nut salad made heady with orange flower water. There are also good family dishes in vegetarian and demi-vegetarian modes which give ideas for adapting other recipes. Here is a speedy main course.

Pasta with green beans and prawns
(serves 4)
750g French beans, trimmed
225g egg noodles
1½ tsp sunflower oil
½ tsp sesame oil
350g peeled prawns
2 cloves garlic, crushed
3tbsp soy sauce

Halve the beans, simmer for five minutes. Drain. Cook noodles according to packet instructions. Heat oils, stir-fry prawns and garlic for two minutes. Add beans and noodles, stir four minutes. (Variation: instead of prawns use 350g mushrooms — mixed caps and chanterelles are particularly nice.)

© *Eat for Life*, by Janette Marshall and Anne Heughan, Vermilion, £8.99.

Dishes to set before a prince

There's more to eating in Wales than leeks and laver bread, as five young chefs proved when they staged a stately banquet there

In the depths of rural Wales on a wet and windy February night, where ten years ago you could have driven 100 miles to find a decent cup of tea, five young chefs were gathered in the kitchen of a hotel near Brecon, in Powys. They were there to create a banquet that would finally lay to rest any suggestion that the principality is a gastronomic wilderness.

Nobody can be quite sure when the Welsh began to demand more than lamb, leeks and laver bread, but in the picture-postcard scenery of the north and the industrial valleys of the south, hotels, restaurants, pubs and coffee shops are increasingly taking up the challenge to serve fresh Welsh produce.

A new breed of chef, few of them native, but all dedicated to promoting the taste of Wales, has grown up to grab some of the glory from the remarkable Franco Tarschilio, whose Walnut Tree Inn at Llandudno Skirrid in Gwent was for many years a lone oasis in the Welsh culinary desert.

Last week, in the sumptuous atmosphere of Sir Bernard Ashley's £3.5 million hotel, Llangoed Hall at Llysfaen, the five joined forces to create a six-course gourmet dinner served with fine wine at £100 a head. The shock of the price tag was tempered by the fact that all proceeds were donated to Barnardo's.

Before dinner there were mouth-watering canapés served with champagne in the drawing-room, among the huge comfortable chairs and priceless antiques. It was a truly Edwardian country-house party atmosphere — just as Sir Bernard had planned when he bought the almost derelict house less than five years ago.

To single out courses for special praise in a meal which had obviously been so carefully put together to create perfect balance seems almost churlish, but outstanding were a warm salad of monkfish with Carmarthen ham and mushrooms by Red Michelin star-holder Chris Chown, aged 34, of Plas Bodegros near Pwllheli in north Wales, and roast loin of Welsh lamb by Mark Salter, the chef at Llangoed. This was served with a delicate herb crust in a



Culinary star: 29-year-old Mark Salter, chef at Llangoed Hall near Brecon, serves up another fine feast

lamb, vegetable and basil stock and exquisitely shaped vegetables, which were remarkably simple and yet outstandingly good.

Could this be the same Wales where once it was promised the meal of a lifetime after climbing Snowdon? In a similarly sumptuous establishment I vividly recall being served a watery vichyssoise followed by salmon that looked and tasted as though it had been under the grill all day. It was so bad we left still hungry.

Having at last seized on the fact that lobster and sea bass abound around the shores of Wales and premium-quality lamb can also be

earmarked for the home market, new chefs are producing a style of cooking that is distinctly Welsh.

The oldest of the five was Keith Rothwell, the 40-year-old chef at the Old Bull's Head, Beaumaris, Anglesey. He returned to his native Wales from Manchester, where he had met his partner David Robertson. Sixteen years ago they took over the Seahouses at Dinorwic — one of the best and busiest pubs and restaurants in Wales.

Mr Rothwell produced two courses at Llangoed — an elegant terrine of pheasant served with port and orange vinaigrette, and

the cheese course: *pencarreg* — a Welsh brie — layered with truffles and served with walnut bread.

Andrew Taylor, aged 24, from the beautiful country house hotel Mawddach at Harlech, which hosted a similar dinner last year, produced a delicate roulade of sea bass and shrimps served in a wild garlic (picked in the hotel grounds) and fennel sauce.

David Thompson, 22, the chef *patissier* at Llandudno's Bodysgallen Hall, produced a Welsh liqueur (Can y Delyn) ice-cream served in a lattice-work almond biscuit with mixed fresh fruits of indeterminate origin. While it looked pretty, it was not the ideal ending to an otherwise perfect meal.

Notable for their absence were women chefs, or any from south Wales, but the participants agreed that having worked so successfully together last year they had been reluctant to invite anyone else to share their kitchen.

"We wanted to build on what we did last year," 29-year-old Mr Salter says, "and it made sense not to spoil the broth."

BRENDA PARRY

John in 1990

Eat to your heart's content

St Valentine was the martyred bishop of Terni in Umbria, not far from Norcia, which is famous for its black truffles. Here the truffles are said to be at their best approaching carnival time, just before Lent, which makes them a fitting dish for Valentine's day.

I thought about this as I sat in a very ordinary restaurant recently not too far from Terni, eating a plate of spaghetti alla norcia. Such was the restaurant that I had no great expectations of the dish — it looked like spaghetti with a dark mushroom sauce. But when I ate a mouthful, there among the mushrooms was the unmistakable chipiness of finely chopped truffle.

This is the dish to make with that carefully hoarded tin of truffle, or even truffle peelings. Even a small amount of truffle will flavour and perfume a staple such as pasta to make it all taste of truffle. Another method for making a little go a long way is to chop it into a risotto, a lovely dish for two.

Truffles have always been a sought-after delicacy, with reputed aphrodisiac properties. Before the fall of Babylon, the city nobles enjoyed them by the basketload. In classical Rome, Pliny, Martial and Apicius wrote about them in glowing terms, and carry Roman cooks devised many subtle methods of preparing the aristocratic tuber, including one using fresh mint, rosemary, olive oil, wine and a little honey.

The cost of truffles today is such that peelings may well be all we can afford, and those for a very special occasion. Michel Bourdin's new kitchen at the Connaught in London was designed with a special cold room/strong room to store the thousands of pounds worth of truffles he uses in a year.

In the hope that someone might buy you a truffle for Valentine's day, here is what to do with it — plus some more recipes for the occasion.

Spaghetti alla norcia	
(serves 2)	
2oz/60g button mushrooms, wiped and finely chopped	
1 shallot, peeled and finely chopped	
1/2pt/70ml extra virgin olive oil	
truffle, chopped	
seasoning	



Frances Bissell
The Times
cook,

serves up a Valentine's dinner

Fry the mushrooms and shallots in half the olive oil until soft. Stir in the truffles, and cook for eight minutes over a low heat. Meanwhile, cook the spaghetti, drain it, and toss in the remaining olive oil. Stir the sauce and pasta together, season lightly, and serve in heated bowls.

Oysters are invested with similar properties to the truffles, and in *Venus in the Kitchen*, Norman Douglas has half a dozen oyster recipes, which are easily cooked for two. Here is one for which I suggest you use half a dozen or so oysters and serve as an appetiser.

Oysters in wine	
(serves 2)	

Heat the oysters in their shells. Open them, take them out, and collect their liquid in a pot. Put the oysters in a frying pan with butter, a sprig (sic) of garlic, mint, marjoram, pounded peppercorns and cinnamon. As soon as they are lightly fried, add their liquor and a glass of Malmsey or another generous wine. Serve them on toast.

In the same collection of recipes dating from the mid-1930s and earlier, also entitled *Love's Cookery Book*, Douglas describes how to prepare grilled oysters by removing them from their shells and seasoning with chopped fresh thyme, grated nutmeg and salt. Sprinkle with soft breadcrumbs, and place two or three oysters in a couple of large, cleaned oyster shells. Place a pat of butter on top, and set the shells on a griddle set over high heat. Once the liquid begins to bubble, add a teaspoon of white wine, and when the oysters' frill begins to curl, serve them, sprinkled with a little nutmeg.

I too like cooked as well as raw



oysters, and this is yet another version of my favourite oyster pie recipe: this time in miniature.

Little oyster pie	
(makes 6)	
6 oysters	
freshly ground pepper	
6 blanched lettuce leaves	
4lb/110g flaky pastry	
3oz/85g softened butter	
3 anchovy fillets, chopped	
good pinch of mace	
2tbsp soft white breadcrumbs	
grated zest of 1 lemon	

Remove the oysters from their shells, keeping the juice. Season lightly with pepper, and wrap in the lettuce leaves. Roll out the pastry, and line six tart tins. Mix the remaining ingredients, together with a little lemon juice and the strained oyster juice. Place some of the mixture in the lined tart tins, the wrapped oysters on top and the remaining butter mixture. Top the tarts with pastry lids. Brush with

an egg yolk and water glaze if you wish, and bake in a pre-heated oven at 200C/400F, gas mark 8 for ten minutes. Serve hot or warm.

The next recipe can be made with leftover champagne — if there is such a thing.

Rose champagne granita	
(serves 2)	
up to 1tbsp sifted icing sugar, to taste	
5fl oz/140ml rose champagne	

Stir the sugar into the champagne, and freeze the mixture in a sorbetière or ice-cream maker, or in a freezerproof container in the ice-making compartment of your refrigerator. If using the latter method, keep stirring the sides of the granita to the middle so that the mixture freezes evenly. A food processor is useful to blend the mixture before the final freezing.

Do not let the mixture freeze too hard. A granita is a soft, 'grainy' mixture when it is served. Here are some crisp biscuits to go with it.

Almond biscuits	
(makes about 18)	
1 egg white	
pinch of salt	
2oz/60g caster sugar	
1tsp grated lemon zest	
2oz/60g ground almonds	
1tbsp flour, sifted	

Preheat the oven to 140-150C/275 F, gas mark 1-2. Whisk the egg white until foamy. Add the salt, and continue whisking until firm. Gradually add the sugar, and whisk until stiff. Carefully fold in the rest of the ingredients. Line baking trays with greased greaseproof paper, and drop the mixture on to it in teaspoonfuls. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until set and golden brown. Cool on a wire rack.

ROSE hearts can be served with a fruit compote, fresh fruit or a fruit sauce. At this time of year, a delicate pink sauce made from the early forced rhubarb is perfect. In summer or autumn, a soft fruit

sauce is delightful. The flavouring of the yoghurt and cheese mixture can also be changed. Substitute orange flower water for the rose-water, and serve with sliced oranges, or use freshly chopped mint and serve with blackcurrant or raspberry sauce.

You can buy individual heart-shaped pierced moulds imported from France in good kitchenware shops. Line the moulds with damp muslin or cheesecloth to stop the mixture drying out too much. If you cannot obtain moulds, pierced yoghurt or cottage cheese cartons are a good substitute, but you will, of course, lose the heart shape.

Rose hearts	
(serves 2)	
2 1/2oz/70g thick Greek-style plain yoghurt	
2oz/60g curd cheese or sieved cottage cheese	
1 egg white	
2tsp rosewater	
clear honey or caster sugar, to taste	

Blend the yoghurt and curd or cottage cheese, mix in the rose-water until smooth, and sweeten to taste. Whisk the egg white to form peaks, and fold into the cheese. Spoon the mixture into lined moulds, place on a plate, and refrigerate for about 12 hours to drain and firm up.

When ready to serve, turn out on to plates, and carefully peel the muslin from the moulded cheese mixture.

Rhubarb sauce	
(serves 2)	
6oz/170g forced rhubarb	
caster sugar, to taste	
grated nutmeg	

Chop the rhubarb into 1in/2.5cm chunks, but do not peel it. Rinse it and place in a saucepan with the sugar. Cook gently, partially covered, until the fruit is tender. Sweeten to taste. Rub through a sieve, sprinkle with nutmeg, and chill until required.

Darling sips for St Valentine

Everyone can say it with pink fizz next Friday — even champagne is reduced, reports Jane MacQuitty

Pink fizz is the obvious romantic drink for February 14 and there is plenty of it around — at bargain prices.

I find the ubiquitous Angas Brut Rose from Australia somewhat dull and lifeless now that shiraz, not cabernet sauvignon, is its main grape. It is on offer at Safeway for £4.99 this month; £5.39 at Victoria Wine.

Much better than Angas Brut is Ackerman Laurence's stylish 1811 Saumur Rose, whose pleasing, pale pink colour and fresh, strawberry-scented fruit is good value at £5.99 from Davison's.

If nothing but champagne will do for your loved one, get Tesco's own-label brut champagne, with its bric-a-brac bouquet and biscuity champagne fruit, down £1 this month to £10.45.

You should also check out Majestic's new house champagne, Bauchtet, from Bisseuil near Epemay, at £8.99. Not everyone will like its stewed apple scent and taste, but it won't give you a hangover.

Best of the bunch among the O'dbins February bin ends are its non-vintage champagnes. Deutz's soft, fruity bubbly is one of the biggest bargains at £12.99, down from £15.49, and Charles Heidsieck's biscuity brut, £15.49 down from £17.99, also looks a good deal.

For most lovers of wine, the mood of euphoria could last all year. The reason is the growing wine war among the hard-pressed high street outlets. Several big companies are up for sale.

Takeovers, such as Wizard Wine's purchase of Majestic Wine Warehouses and the Thresher group's acquisition of the ailing Peter Dominic and Bottoms Up partnership, are good news for wine drinkers. The high street wine scene can only be improved by the removal of the dire bottles that previously made up the Peter Dominic range, and the per-



manently low-stocked position at Majestic.

Augustus Barnett could be the next casualty, with Victoria Wine the predicted purchaser.

So far, 1992 promises to be the year of the cut-throat wine deal. With the increase in VAT and higher prices from growers and merchants, it is astonishing that the drinkable £2.99 bottle continues, but it does — and next month one super-

market is launching a £1.99 selection.

The Victoria Wine company's 900 outlets are a good place to start the £2.99 bargain hunt. The company has followed others in offering free tastings in its larger shops. Today, try Victoria Wine's vanilla-scented, fruity, ripe rioja-like Marqués de Vitoria. This smooth, juicy, easy-to-drink Spanish red is every-

thing a £2.99 winter warmer should be. Half the price of most riojas, this blend of tempranillo and gamacha grapes from Rioja and Navarra proves that cheap Spanish wine does not have to be nasty.

Reduced to £2.99 from £3.19 until February 26 is the simple, cold-fermentation white 1991 Paarl Colombard. I enjoyed the vital floral scent and zesty, albeit slightly dull, fruit of this Cape wine.

Hardy's skilfully vinified Stamp Series duo are Safeway's sale gems at £2.99 for the white and £3.19 for the red (until the end of this month). Australian specialist Oddbins can match, but not beat, these prices and wines from the south Australian family firm of Thomas Hardy and Sons, when they first went on sale here. The 1991 Premium Classic Dry White is the best of the two, a fresh, tropical fruit combination of pineapple, lime and apricot. The 1990 Shiraz-Cabernet Sauvignon red has plenty of dark, juicy, blackberry and blackcurrant-like fruit, but is a shade less spectacular.

Wine drinkers who buy in bulk should go for Majestic's and Wizard Wines' amazing 1991 Far Enough Pinot Noir from South Africa, at £2.99. It is recognisably a pinot noir wine with plenty of jammy, cherry fruit.

Majestic's other February bargains include a négociant-sourced £3.99 Morgon that is good but not great. It is, however, a bargain in that superior cru or village Beaujolais such as this fetch twice the price elsewhere.

Oddbins' regular Saturday tasting sessions include Australia's answer to beaujolais nouveau, the vibrant, inky 1990 Mitchelton Cab-Mac (£4.39) and the extraordinary 1990 The Catalyst from the Bonny Doon winery in California (£4.99). This glorious 100 per cent grenache wine is bright crimson red in colour and blessed with lots of ripe, spicy, rose-scented fruit.

The best of Sainsbury's multi-buy offers are its half-bottles of elegant, brown bread-scented 1990 Chablis, down 40p to £3.35, and Russe Welschriesling and Misket, a Bulgarian white, down 30p to £2.09.

Remember, if it's not a discounted, bin-end wine buy this month, don't buy it.

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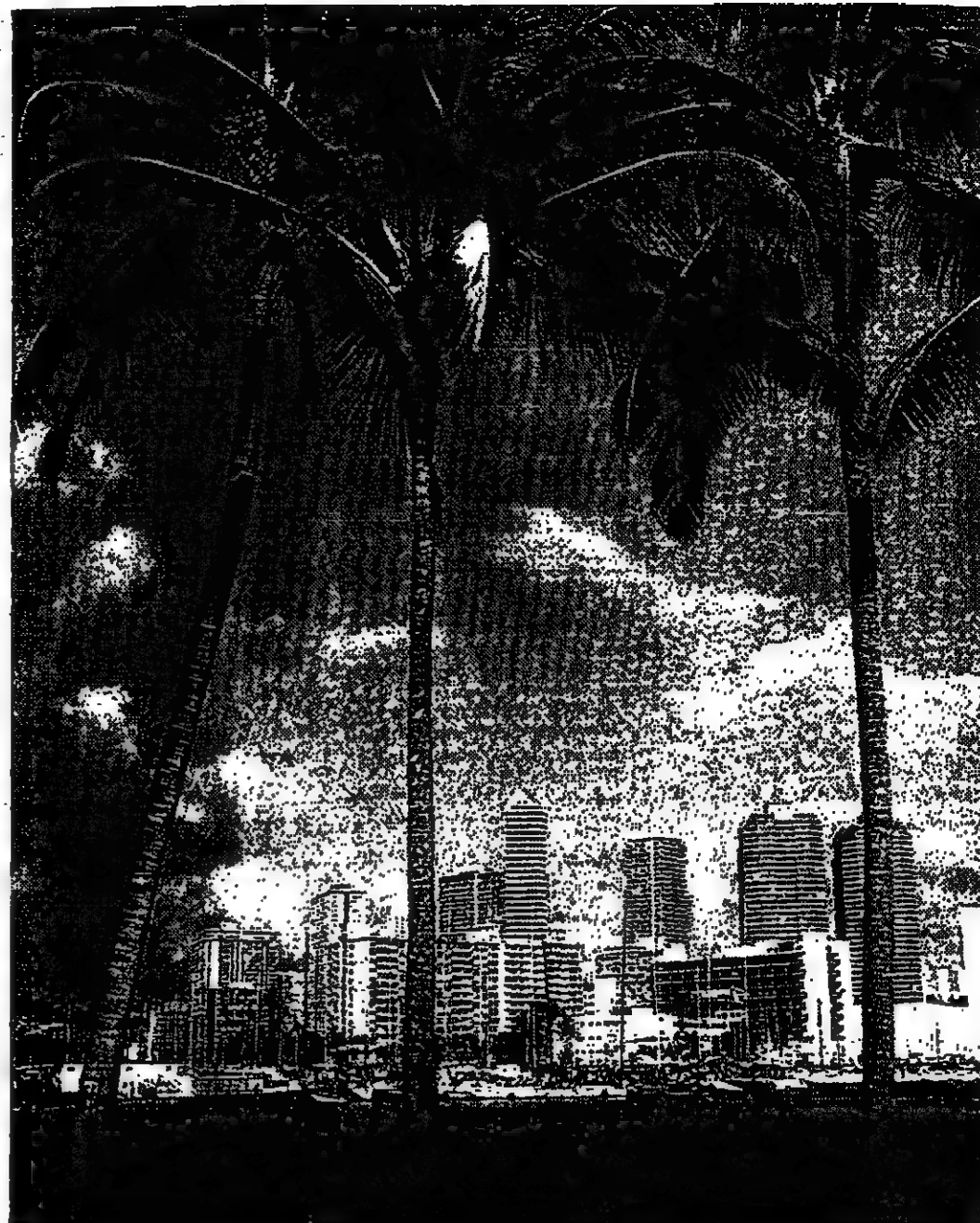
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The right ram for the job?

FARMER'S DIARY: PAUL HEINEY



happy to let slide into history.

But on the page opposite in the book is a useful chart which tells you when to introduce the ram to the ewes to get lambs at the time you require. It told me that August 20 was the day, and on exactly that date, in he went.

Come the second week in January, we started to lamb. We had a set of triplets from one ewe, twins from another, and then one ewe lost her newborn lamb and one of the triplets was adopted on to her to save its harassed mother from having to suckle three lambs on two teats. Lambing was happening like clockwork—then the clock stopped. This, of course, is not uncommon. Presumably, within the first couple of days of entering the flock, the ram had given each of the girls in season a wink and a nod and then, I assumed, none of the other ewes came on heat (or "on song") as they delightfully call it in Suffolk. However, a sheep's reproductive cycle is 16 days, so just over a fortnight after the first chorus of passion, the remaining ewes should be singing their heads off again.

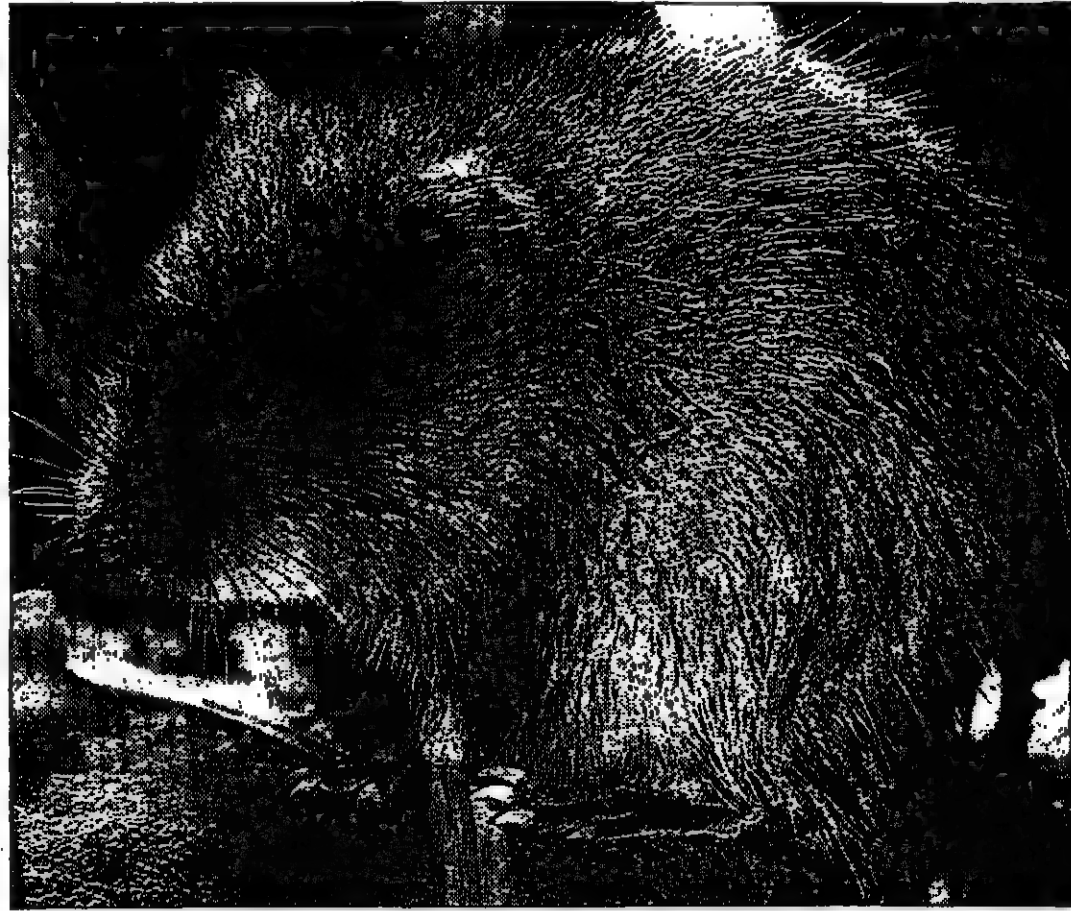


Either they didn't, which is unlikely, or the ram was not there when they did. For after the first flush of lambs was born, nothing happened for more than three weeks. In other words, he missed the concert the second time round. So where was he? Had he gone home? I was around the farm every day over those few weeks and would have spotted him if he had found a gap in the fence. Perhaps he had a headache, or had been reading one of those raunchy Cumbrian novels and gone in search of some younger ewes. Something had clearly taken his mind off the job.

Of course, if the satellite had been on its nosy little orbit, it would have been able to provide the answer to this great mystery. I could have rung Mr Gummer and he would have a print-out of every tupping, complete with duration. The sooner it is launched the better.

In the meantime the ram might need ginning up for next season. I have consulted *The Agricultural Notebook* concerning "tonics". It recommends mixtures of "butter of antimony, Epsom salts, carbolic acid and tincture of myrrh". If that lot doesn't get him joining in the chorus, I wonder what will?

JAMIE BURTON



Fight for life: riverbank improvements and the vicious wild mink are threatening the vole population

Ratty gets into deep water

Our water voles are fast disappearing. Candy Atherton reports on their plight

Britain's water voles are vanishing. This sad news will come as a shock to the thousands who were reared on the adventures of Ratty and his pals in Kenneth Grahame's *Wind in the Willows*. Like crumpets by the fire, they were part of our childhood.

Water voles and water voles are the same animal, according to the Natural History Museum. There is no such thing, they say, as a true water rat in this country: the difference in terminology is dialectal. Clearly where Mr Grahame came from, local custom dictated that the chubby creature with a furry tail was called a water rat.

Water voles are tiny denizens of the waterways. They are the largest of the British vole family, weighing in at between 250 and 300 grams and measuring up to 25cm (10in) from nose to tail. They have long been part of our riverside folklore and were once a common sight, crossing the water every few yards along a river or stream. Now they are seldom seen.

Robert Strachan is a naturalist working with the Vincent Wildlife Trust, an organisation set up in 1975 by Vincent Weir to fund research into British mammal conservation and organisations working for wildlife.

In the past three years Mr Strachan has visited more than 3,000 vole sites and found many of them already abandoned. The villain of the piece, he quickly decided, was the American mink.

This vicious predator, an excellent swimmer and hunter, is breeding and spreading rapidly. When the 1975 Mink Keeping Order came into force many mink farmers felt they could not meet what they considered to be too stringent restrictions of the new laws, and so they closed down. Mr Strachan shares the belief that many farmers solved their problems simply by letting the animals loose into the surrounding countryside, creating an explosion in the population. And our native and harmless water vole is one of its principal victims.

Mr Strachan and his colleagues first studied records and maps going back 90 years of areas where voles were known to live and breed. When they surveyed vole sites that had been documented in the recent past, it soon emerged that the animal was in steady decline.

Other factors such as loss of ponds and the restructuring of river and canal banks have contributed to the depletion.

Moreover, the steady increase in the use of metal sheet piling to support canal banks is preventing the vole from holding its own. Water voles need steep, sloping grassy banks and plenty of cover in the shape of vegetation like grass, sedge and rushes in order to thrive. They need the cover to avoid their original predators, heron and fox. They also need steep banks to build their burrows on several levels in order to keep dry.

The vole's dislike of sheet piling is shared by human canal users. Some say it makes what should be pretty stretches of canal look like the M1 with crash barriers on either side.

Bank maintenance in general is bad news for voles. If a long stretch of river is dredged and the banks reconstituted, the whole local water vole population can be displaced.

Mr Strachan is drawing up a series of recommendations for British waterways and water boards which will argue that maintenance work should be done in small sections rather than long stretches. "It would help if only one bank of no more than 500 metres was repaired at a time," he says.

In a few areas the water vole is adapting to changing circumstances; it is occasionally found living in burrows behind the sheeting. "There are also small islands of vole population where there are ponds, little streams and marshland," Mr Strachan says.

"The decline will certainly slow down, although in some areas the level of population is already so low that extinction is almost certain," he says. "But the vole will not disappear entirely because there are places such as wildlife reserves where it will survive. I was at Slimbridge recently and voles could be seen everywhere. This is because the reserve is managed to the advantage of voles, and the mink is controlled."

There are one or two more glimmers of light on the horizon. It has been found, for example, that mink seem to prefer rivers to canals, and in some areas mink and voles live together where there

EVENTS

West Perry, nr Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire (0480 810531). Sunday Feb 16, 10am-4pm. £15 inc lunch (advance booking only).

□ Newbury tote: Eight races, with highlights including the Arlington Premier Series Chase Final at 12.50pm, the Tote Gold Trophy at 2pm and the Game Spirit Steeplechase at 2.35pm.

Newbury Racecourse, Berkshire (0635 40015). Today 12.20pm. £3-£15.

□ Oxford dog show: 140 dogs compete in the Associated Sheep, Police and Army Dog Society Championship, predominantly German shepherds and border collies. Village Hall, Horspath.

Oxfordshire (Information from Mrs Jones on 0472 342283). Monday to Sunday Feb 16, 10am-5pm. Spectators free.

□ Stoneleigh dressage: Riding club evening dressage competitions put around 30 horses through their paces in both a preliminary and novice dressage test. British Equestrian Centre, Stoneleigh, nr Kenilworth, Warwickshire (0203 696697).

Tues 5.30pm. Spectators free. □ Yorkshire ramble: John Negus leads a 13-mile walk via Blackthorn Dams and Old Gang Beck, with its bloused snail mill. Village centre, Cunncliffe, nr Reeth, North Yorkshire. Tomorrow 10am, free.

GARDENS TO VISIT

□ Sussex: Small formal town garden in the Dutch style, geometric beds, box edging, garden artefacts and trellis, attached to Queen Anne house containing period rooms and art (new exhibition opens today). Pallant House, North Pallant, Chichester, West Sussex. Open Tues-Sat 10am-5.30pm. House and garden £2.50, child £1.

□ Wiltshire: Formal garden south of Longleat House, modified by Russell Page. Attractive orangery; newly established arboretum. Longleat, on A362, 4.5m SE of Frome, Wiltshire. Winter opening daily 10am-4pm. Free.

□ Co. Down: Walled garden with remarkable collection of trees and shrubs, heather, arboretum with park and forest and lough-side walks. National Arboretum, Castlereagh, Co. Down, Northern Ireland. Open daily. Admission free in winter.

For general enquiries, call the Flexibreaks Helpline on 071-229 9660. For travel-related enquiries, call Flexibreaks Travel Service on 071-387 2390, Monday to Friday, 9.30am-6pm (excluding bank holidays).

If you would like a short description of the hotels offered, please state destination and country, and send a stamped, addressed envelope to: Flexibreaks Helpline, 126 Ladbroke Grove, London W10 5NE.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

1 When one person pays for a scheduled flight and hotel room, a second person goes free (based on official Apex fares and not special fares, and on two people sharing a hotel bedroom).

2 Holidays must be selected from the destinations and hotels listed, for the minimum number of nights indicated, and for departures from the UK.

3 Travel must be completed by December 31 1992 and bookings made at least 28 days before departure.

4 Readers are required to purchase full travel and cancellation insurance from the Flexibreaks Travel Service for all people travelling. The policy chosen includes full cover in case of financial failure of an airline.

5 To make a booking, complete the booking form below and send it to the Flexibreaks Travel Service at 61 Bayham Place, London NW1 0ET, accompanied by:

6 Six differently numbered tokens collected from The Times:

7 A deposit of £100 (Europe) or £160 (worldwide);

8 The correct insurance premium for two people (details of insurance premiums are printed below);

9 Proof of postage will not be accepted as proof of delivery.

7 For bookings made between eight and four weeks before departure, full prepayment is required. For bookings made more than eight weeks before departure, send deposit and insurance premium only, the balance to be paid within eight weeks before departure.

8 Once the holiday details have been

accepted, no refunds can be made. Failure to pay on time will result in automatic cancellation of your holiday and loss of deposit. Limited amendments may be possible, for which a charge will be made.

9 The air fares and hotel rates listed may vary from those shown and will be confirmed at the time of booking.

10 All holidays will be booked by the Flexibreaks Travel Service (ABTA number 7791X, ATOL 2286) who will redeem the offer according to the Terms and Conditions, printed here. The supplier's own conditions will also apply.

11 All holidays are subject to availability. The right is reserved to substitute alternative hotels if necessary. All information is correct at the time of going to press.

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1992 (adult) rates in sterling

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Children aged between two and 11 go at 67 per cent or 75 per cent of the adult fare, depending on destination. Children under two travel at 10 per cent of the adult fare.

Choose your destination and hotel from the chart on the opposite page. We have indicated the approximate cost of Apex fares from London; other departure points are available and prices will be quoted on request. Should you wish to upgrade flights, supplements will apply on both flights.

Under the heading "hotel prices" on the chart opposite, we have indicated the cost of a room for occupation by one person. The second person shares the room free of charge. If you wish to stay longer than the minimum number of nights shown, extra nights can be booked at preferential rates.

To work out the approximate cost of your holiday for two people, take the Apex fare for one person, and add the hotel cost multiplied by the number of days you wish to stay. Then add two insurance premiums from the chart above.

Readers should then complete the booking form below and send it to the Flexibreaks Travel Service, together with a cheque for the deposit and insurance premium, and six differently numbered tokens. Postal bookings only.

Please give a choice of dates if possible. Early booking is advised to avoid disappointment.

When Flexibreaks receives your booking form, you will be given a telephoned quote for the holiday and any extra nights required. Once you decide to go ahead, Flexibreaks will book the flights and hotel, and give you all the details over the telephone. On acceptance of these, the holiday will be booked and an invoice sent. If we cannot meet your requirements, your cheque will be returned.

Tickets, hotel vouchers and insurance policy will be sent ten-14 days before departure.

Please remember to attach your six differently numbered Fly Free - Stay Free tokens to the booking form.

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Please read the Terms and Conditions of the offer and the How to Book details before completing this booking form.

Name (of person applying):

Mr/Mrs/Ms (Surname) (First name) Age

Address

Home tel. Daytime tel. Postcode

Name of companion:

Mr/Mrs/Ms (Surname) (First name) Age

Names of other people in party

Holiday destination town

Departure airport (from UK)

Preferred departure dates:

1st choice: Out Return

2nd choice: Out Return

Preferred hotel

Type of room: (tick) Double ☐ Twin ☐ Family room ☐

Number of nights' stay

Special requests:

I, being the person authorised by all persons listed above to act on their behalf, have read the Terms and Conditions which I understand and accept. Please arrange the holiday detailed above, in respect of which I enclose a cheque for £ being the deposit and insurance. (Please make cheques payable to "Flexibreaks Travel Service")

Signed Date

Person to whom all correspondence should be sent

Send completed and signed booking form to:

The Times/Fly Free - Stay Free Offer

Flexibreaks Travel Service, 61 Bayham Place, London NW1 0ET

The Government Auction Handbook

Ever wondered what happens to the stock and assets of a company when declared bankrupt? Ever considered where the property and possessions seized by HM Customs and Excise are sold? Ever questioned what the Official Receiver, Liquidators, Bailiffs, and the Collector of Taxes do with the goods they sequester?

They're sold off at auction to the highest bidder. But these auctions are unlike any other - THERE ARE NO RESERVE PRICES. The goods offered at government appointed auctions have to be sold there and then for whatever they will fetch.

Most items realise no more than 10% of their market value. You will find all manner of goods there, including boats, planes, automobiles, office equipment, jewellery, video cameras, televisions, fine art and much, much more. And all at knockdown prices. Just take a look at the examples below, noted at recent auctions, all either brand new or in first class condition.

Item	Auction Price (£)	Retail Price (£)
Range Rover, 1984, B Reg	2450	6500
Xerox Fax Machine (as new)	75	699
Amstrad PC Computer	33	499
Canon Photocopier	22	790
Garden Shed (boxed, new)	12	350
Olivetti Electronic Typewriter	90	304
Leather Bound Office Chair	10	125
Dishwasher	20	250
Three Aluminium Step Ladders	17	170
Panasonic Phone and Answer-machine	30	189
Sharp Microwave Oven (unused)	30	190
Fuji FZ2000 Zoom Camera	45	239
Yamaha LC 125 Motorcycle (2300 miles)	135	950
Toyota Sewing Machine	30	775
Rotary Gold Watch	50	339
Hoppoint Washing Machine (new)	35	121
Case of 12 Glenfiddich Whisky	20	679
Akai Midi Hi-Fi System (boxed)	25	

Government auctions are held throughout the country approximately every two weeks. The only reason you may not have heard about them is simply because they are not widely publicised. Contrary to popular belief, these auctions are NOT a closed shop exclusively reserved for traders - anyone is allowed to attend them.

The Government Auction Handbook provides you with a comprehensive list of auctions throughout the country - their sale days and times. Also included with your handbook are instructions on how to place the lowest possible price and how to set yourself up as a dealer, simply and easily. But this is not one of those books professing to tell you how to get rich quick. It's primarily designed to save you money, lots of money.

As one reader in Norfolk puts it in a recent letter to us: "Your book was the best £12 I have ever spent". And another reader, this time in Yorkshire, writes to say: "I have made enough profit from ONE sale to pay for the Handbook 90 times over!"

If you're the kind of person who would like a brand new Sony CD Hi-Fi for fifteen quid, an IBM computer system for as little as a tenner, a speedboat with 40 horse power outboard for less than the cost of a romantic weekend in Grimsby, or a car for ten pence on the pound, then you really should send off for The Government Auction Handbook immediately. Just complete and return the form below.

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To: Carnell Ltd., Brook Barn, Main Road, Alresford nr. Colchester, Essex CO7 8AP.

Please rush me _____ copies of The Government Auction Handbook at £12.95 each (includes p&p) on the understanding that if not delighted I can return it within 30 days for a full refund.

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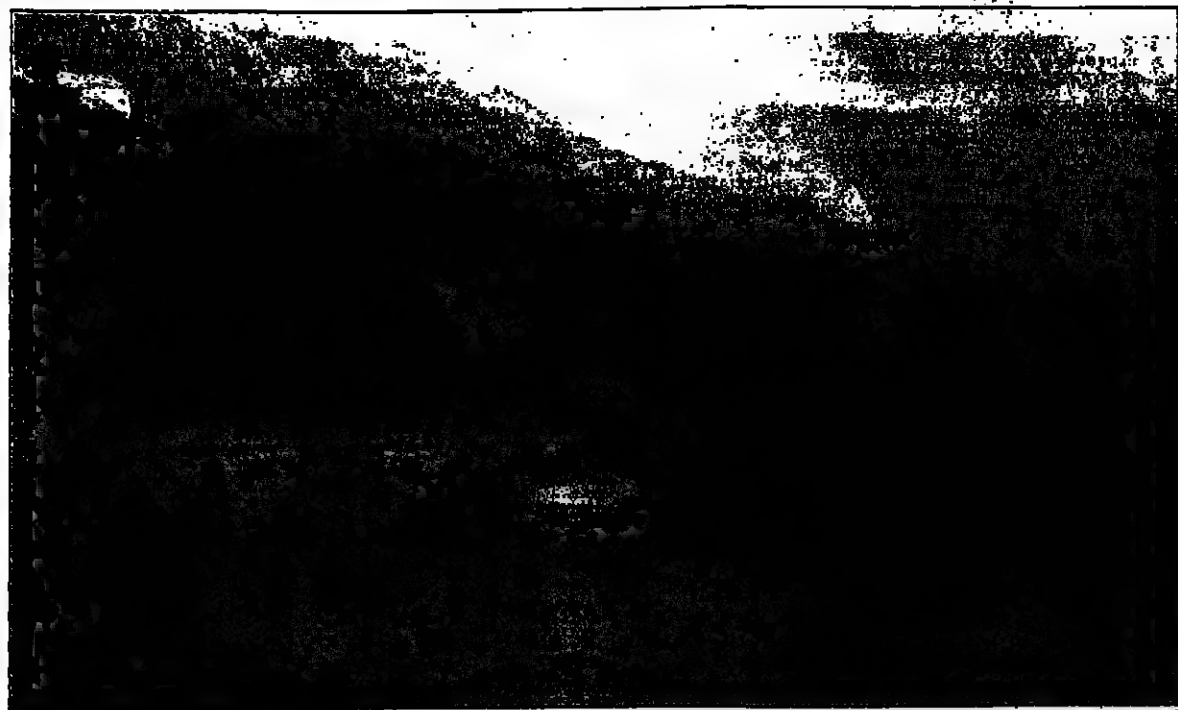
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WHERE TO WALK



Still waters running deep: Llyn Padarn, where wood warblers pipe and great spotted woodpeckers hammer

The "big walk" in these parts, inaugurated by the Rucksack Club in 1919, starts from Snowdon's summit and encompasses 24 miles and 11,000 feet of ascents to tour all 14 of the 3,000ft peaks in Wales. For the less ambitiously inclined I offer instead a gentle, relatively undemanding perambulation of Llyn Padarn.

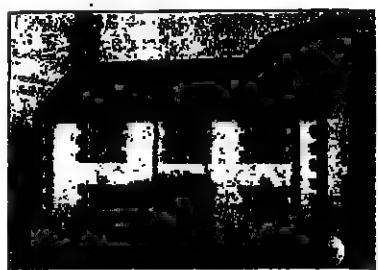
It starts from the car-park in Padarn Country Park, Llanberis. Follow the park trail signs up the steep incline down which trolley cars brought slate to the workshops, and turn left on to the unmetalled road-way past the Vivian Quarry, with a slate car still suspended above its pool, and climbers probably tackling the Dervish and Conscience slabs on the right of the third and fourth quarry tiers.

Follow the road under slate walling and a bridge dated 1886 to the Quarry Hospital, now restored as a visitor centre showing how it operated in Victorian times. Hospitalisation was not always enough for quarry accidents. The building in the corner of the garden which you pass as you leave was the mortuary.

At the top of the climb through sessile oak woods, where wood warblers pipe through May and June, great spotted woodpeckers hammer and pied flycatchers breed, a bench on the right has a good view of Snowdon's summit on clear days. Looking slightly right of the 13th-century ruins of Dolbadarn Castle, and just below the first ridge, you may discern the silhouette in the mountainside fancifully called "The Lady of Snowdon".

The path goes down to a wooden gate by the Fachwen stream. A short diversion left takes you down to the ruins of an old woollen mill and its workers' cottages. The disused building on the left may have been the manager's house, and the ditch by the path once carried the water to drive the machinery. Return, and go through the wooden gate and over the slate slab bridge across the river. Follow the Gwynedd county council logo sign on up the main path, not the yellow footpath trail sign climbing away to the right.

You pass some small disused quarries, in one of which caravan dwellers are now keeping livestock including a



Local colour: a cottage by the lake

pair of bright ginger pigs. You pass under a disused line which would have brought slates down from one quarry to the lakeside railway, which opened in 1843 to carry Dinorwic slate for shipment to Liverpool and the world. You pass enviably sited derelict cottages, and head up the bank by a footpath making straight for a television relay mast, to reach the Fachwen road through a kissing gate by a phone box. Turn left and descend, past cottages with outstanding views and a derelict slate-hung chapel, into conifer wood, where you may spot goldcrests. By the Padarn Park sign there is a small car-park on the left, and on the right you are likely to see a local outdoor pursuits centre initiating rock climbers of the future.

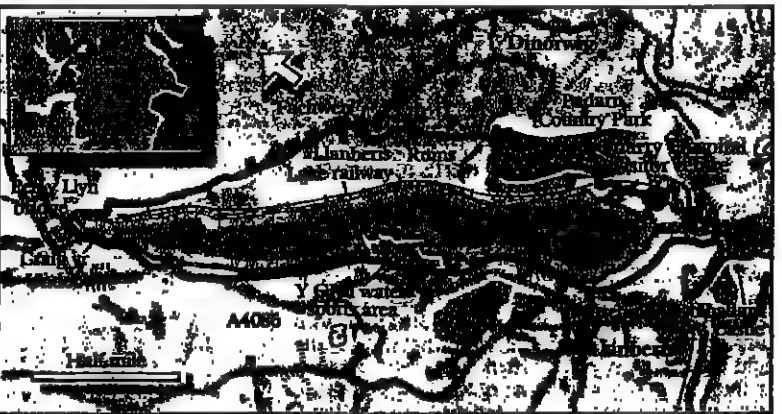
In the areas of scrub look out for whitethroats, wrens, whinchats and stonechats. At the end of the lake cross the disused track of the lakeside railway, and the 18th-century Pen y Llyn bridge. Keep to the disused

roadway along the lakeside, crossing a stile. At a second, now redundant stile, turn briefly right through a gap in the wall to see a plaque commemorating the centenary of the North Wales Quarrymen's Union, whose leaders used this Craig yr Undeb (Rock of the Union) to address their rallies. Cross a third stile and turn briefly right, back toward Caernarfon, to cross the A4086, and through a wooden gateway on the left-hand side of the road, turning back to walk through a tunnel on the dismantled line of the one-time Llanberis-Caernarfon railway.

Alternatively avoid crossing the road and walking through the tunnel by turning left and following the A4086 for about 60 yards to a gap in the wall, where steps descend to the former railway line.

Follow the line along the lakeside, over an embankment causeway and past Y Glyn water sports area before emerging on to the A4086 again at the start of the Llanberis by-pass. Go through the children's recreation area beside the lake, cross two footbridges and follow the line of stiles across the lakeside fields until you reach the bridge over the river. Join up with the access road leading to the car-park.

The walk, including detours, is about 3½ miles of moderately easy walking, mostly over well-made paths and quiet roads. The OS map reference for the starting point is in the car-park at Glynch Dafydd SH587604. Outdoor Leisure Map 17: Snowdonia, or Landranger 115: Snowdon.



BEST OF BRITAIN

SNOWDONIA

The Llanberis Pass, thronged in summer, is a raw and thrilling place in winter. Robin Young reports

Rock climbing originated in north Wales. Coming down the seven-mile descent through Llanberis Pass it is easy to see why. In Britain roads do not come much rockier. It is dark, sinister, tumultuous and awful. Thousands of people love it, and in summer it will be crawling with cars and climbers. What winter visitors lose by way of daylight and amenities is amply repaid by the feeling of having sensed not Snowdonia, as Thomas Pennant, the first tourist in Wales, dubbed it, but the real, raw Eryri which preceded it — the snowy haunt of the vanished eagles of Wales.

As late as the last century there was no road here at all. Labourers from the copper mines by Glaslyn humped lumps of ore on their backs up the zig-zag climb over Mount Snowdon to reach the closest road, which ran from Caernarfon to Beddgelert. Visitors to Llanberis could not even come by carriage from Caernarfon then. They had to embark, in rowing boats at Cwm y glo-to-be ferried up the lake.

Yet as soon as the cart road known as the Miners' Track was opened to Pen-y-Pass in 1856, a visitor who had struggled to the top of Snowdon complained grumpily: "The mountain is thronged this summer... it is ascended by everyone."

In 1881 the local guidebook rather touchingly called Llanberis "the Chamouny of Wales". The description might appear ridiculous to casual visitors today, but it has never been a wholly unreasonable claim. Look, for instance, in this January's issue of *Climber and Hill Walker*. You will find an article on Chamonix ("Cragging the alpine way"), preceded by one called "Quality Crag" — and that is devoted to Dinas Cromlech in the Llanberis Pass.

Llanberis lies at the foot of Snowdon on the shores of Llyn (Lake) Padarn, but it is a quarrymen's village at heart, and was never cut out to be a holiday resort. In summer it is crammed with visitors, cars and queues for the Snowdon Mountain Railway, whose quaintly colourful steam engines have

been making mountaineering easy and safe for tourists on Britain's only rack and pinion railway since 1896. In winter the railway is closed (it reopens on March 15). Llanberis is left largely to Welsh speakers and rock climbers, with few regrets.

No mountain in Europe has such legendary fame as Snowdon. Nor has any been loved in such intimate detail. Seen from Llanberis and Llyn Padarn it might, at first, be difficult to discern why. As before a mountain of mystery Snowdon spends a lot of its time with its head wreathed in mist and clouds.



A waterfall at Aberglaslyn

but even on clear days from the Llanberis side its peak only just peeps over a rumpled mass of mountains in front, almost hidden by its nearest rival, Crib y Ddysgl.

In fact, though, the volcanoes and glaciers which made Snowdon gave it more characterful form than many slips several times its size.

The mountain is shaped like a peak-backed starfish made up of sharp ridges and steep cwmms, and accessible from half a dozen directions. Seen from the east, at Capel Curig on the A5, it dominates the serrated peaks which form the skyline, and from the south it is a single cone, soaring loftily above its small neighbour Aran. From the west and the Caernarfon to Porthmadog road it is seen in the centre of a wide valley, flanked by acolytes.

The Welsh name for Snow-

don, Yr Wydffa, means the great burial mound. The story was that this was the final resting place of the giant Rhita Mawr, slain by King Arthur. Arthur's claim to be considered the first British rock-climber was filed by the medieval romance, Thomas Malory: "King Arthur yoked up to the crest of the cragge, and than he comforted himself with the colde winde".

As the Edwardian pioneer Geoffrey Winthrop Young, poet, Cambridge don and eventually, after losing a leg in the Great War, one-legged conqueror of the Matterhorn, dryly observed, Arthur's supposed ascent of Lliwedd, on the Snowdon Horseshoe, contained "all the elements that make up a good climb: its successful completion, the personal reaction of the climber, and his motive".

The first recorded ascent of Snowdon was not until 1639, and Lliwedd, which even without King Arthur has to be regarded as Wales's most historic cliff, did not succumb until A.H. Stocker astonished alpinists by casually climbing it in January 1883.

Now more than 250,000 people walk, hike, bike, and climb over Snowdon every year, and two gangs of men work full time maintaining the heavily pounded paths to the top.

The peak traffic, though, is of only marginal concern to real climbers. They are pitting their wits, strength and stamina against the vertiginous hard rock faces further down.

Snowdon and the Llanberis Pass have some of the most challenging and terrifying climbs to be found anywhere. People train here to conquer the world, as the triumphant British Everest team proved in 1953. You can still see their names scrawled on the bar ceiling at their training headquarters, the Pen-y-Gwryd Hotel, along with a collection of boots which have been on famous climbs, the Everest team's tankards, a length of the rope that tied Hillary and Tensing together at the summit, and a piece of the summit itself.

Some of the most strenuous classic climbs can easily be reached, or watched, from the Pass road. On the way down toward Llanberis pull in, if it is not already fully parked, at the lay-by on the left just after you have crossed the small bridge, Pont-y-cromlech. Go to the head of the lay-by, and look directly up above the bus stop sign opposite. The fortress of rock towering above you is Dinas Cromlech, as featured in *Climber and Hill Walker*, and the distinctive notch 120ft deep with two smooth, vertical walls set at perfect right angles, like the corner of a box or the pages of an open book, is the most famous rock-climb in Britain, Cenotaph Corner. The first man to climb the perfect line straight up the corner, 40 years ago, was Joe Brown, who now has the climbing equipment shop in Llanberis High Street.

In these days of high-friction "sticky sole" boots, the Corner is now regularly climbed free, but it still looks, and is, impossible to most people.

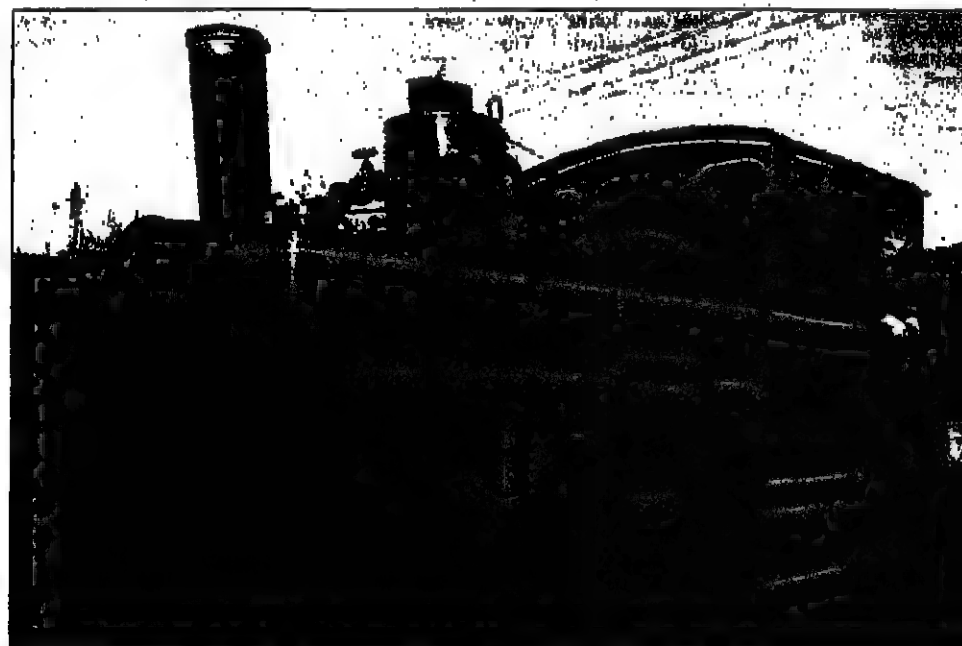
Climbers have their own sys-

Hanging by a thread:

tem for grading climbs, "easy" and "moderate" to "difficult" to "extremely difficult". The "extremely severe" grade now an open-ended system resented by E followed number, giving an overexpression of the degree of difficulty. The higher the number more unthinkable the climb.

Cenotaph Corner is called E1 (which extra termed "mild extra severe"). Look right, to the right-hand wall. The most ascent of that, first led by Ron Fawcett in 1979 almost imperceptible cracks, pockets and ledges in the rock, is Lord Flies, and rates E6. The way up the right wall star a little further right at the hand end of the grassy below a short wall. This E5, Both E5 and E6 would be translated as "not extremely severe".

To witness even scarier ring-do you would have to



Spring steamer: the Snowdon Mountain Railway, Britain's only rack and pinion railway

Little things designed to annoy in

How not to be upset by the welcome, irritated by the lighting or intimidated by the sommelier on your expensive weekend break

Dinner wear

You have been warned that gentlemen are expected to wear jackets and ties for the evening meal and are dressed appropriately. It irks you to discover that *de rigueur* is not all that rigorous, and that other male guests are insouciant in their Armani pullovers or soft leather jackets. If you like a dressy occasion you resent these dissidents: if you do not, you regret that you, too, have not had the courage to dress down.

Pre-dinner drinks

You follow protocol and order aperitifs in the lounge while you are shown a menu. The room is crowded; there's no place to sit in cosy intimacy, and the conversation with your partner is desultory and stilted. Your neighbours are heavy smokers, and smoking is banned only in the restaurant. The maître d' takes a long time to bring you the menu, a longer time before taking your order, and a still longer time before you are called to your table. You order a

second round of the house champagne cocktail and wish you hadn't.

Dinner

The meal is all that it's cracked up to be, but you would have preferred an alternative, lighter option than the six-course marathon. You would happily miss out the entrée, after a couple of generous *amuse-gueules*, a brilliant hors d'oeuvre and a rich fish course, and knowing that there are cheese, desserts and *franchises* still to follow. You consider leaving half your *filet de boeuf* on your plate, but hate to appear a dissatisfied guest. You would like to ask for a doggy bag but haven't the nerve. As for the wine, you have chosen a suitably fine premier cru with the help of a knowledgeable sommelier, but your waiter makes you feel you've misbehaved when he catches you helping yourself even though your glasses have been empty for quite a while.

Breakfast

After the display of haute cuisine the night before it is disappointing to

discover a lower order of gastronomy on offer the next morning. Fresh orange juice turns out to be fresh from-the-packet, or freshly squeezed the night before so that it tastes packagey, or else you are asked to pay £3.50 extra if you want the real thing. The butter comes in plastic pats, the little pots of jam have no discernible taste, the toast is made from Mother's Pride. And you are asked to pay a swinging surcharge if you want the full works.

Checking out

"Thanks to the computer, the bill is detailed and intelligible. It's difficult to argue about the £6.50 for the pot of jam on your arrival and the £3.50 for the Pernier at dinner. Hotels like this have high overheads and it's reasonable that they should charge what the market will bear. If you are going to quibble about every small item, you tell yourself, you have no business to come here in the first place. But your mind having had a mean thought,

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The Kensington Close, Grosvenor House, Forte Crest Bloomsbury, Hotel Russell, The Strand Palace or The Waldorf. Prices vary according to show and hotel. £59 buys midweek tickets for Carmen Jones, staying at Regent Palace hotel.

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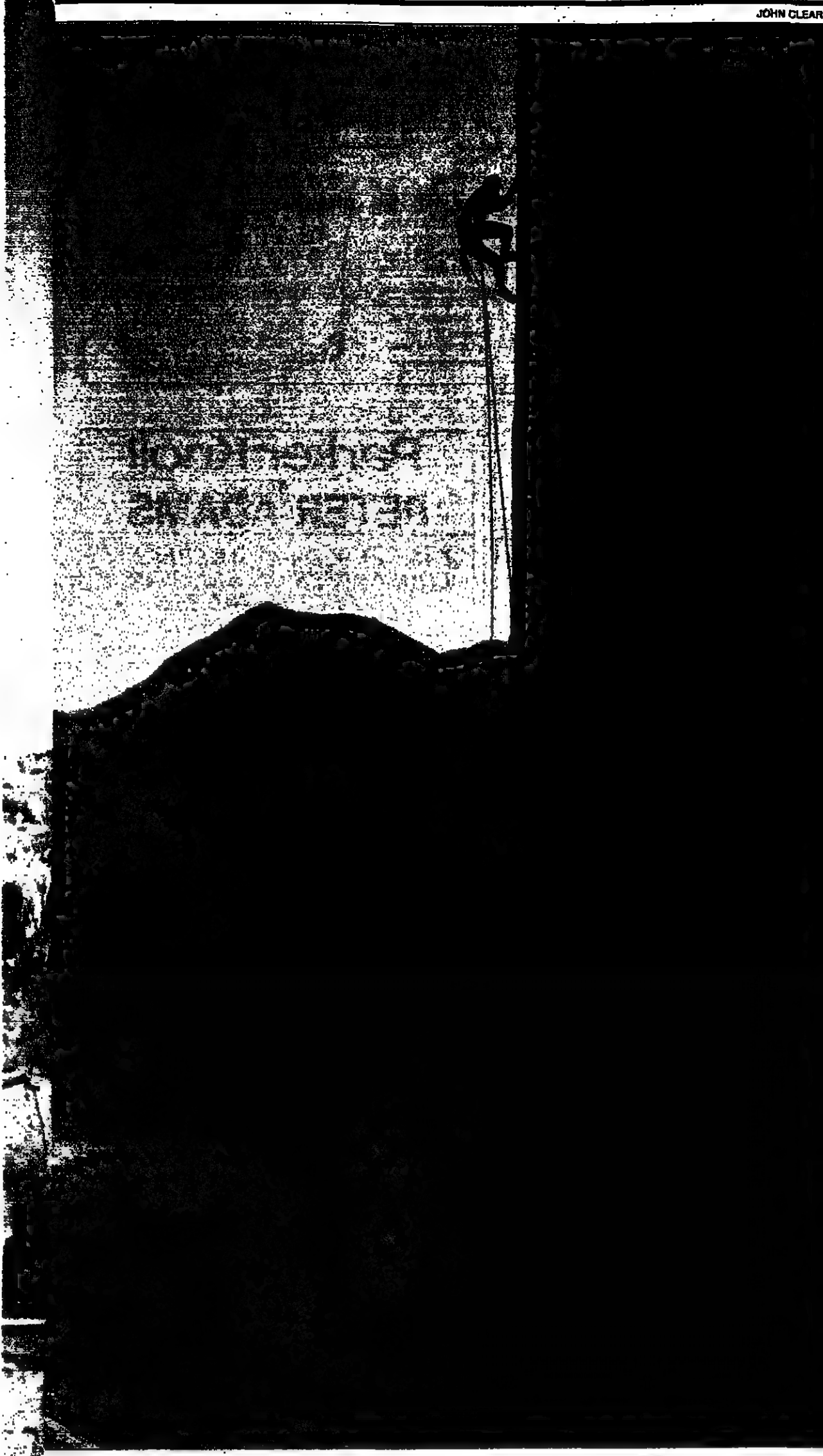
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BOOKINGS MUST BE MADE BY FEB 11th 1992

All hotel and theatre bookings subject to availability. All details correct as time of publication. Offer available from 26 Feb-26th February 1992, based on notice of 40 hours or more. Offer only valid on bookings made between 26 Feb and 11th Feb 1992. This offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Seat numbers can be confirmed the following day. In the event of cancellation we reserve the right to charge a cancellation fee of £20 per person. No single bedrooms not available at Regent Palace Hotel.



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action on the left wall of Cenotaph Corner, on the steep crag of Dinas Cromlech, high above Llanberis Pass

Llanberis path up Snowdon, enough to crest the rise and the green tin refreshment shack known as Halfway. What rears in front of there is the high altar of climbing, the uncomprehendingly majestic walls, and buttresses of Clogwyn Ard.

Clogwyn means "precipice" in Welsh, and a frightful, sheer, black precipice it is. The first to know to have climbed a vicar on a plant-collecting expedition in 1798, admitting they only went on up once they had started danger of again descending much too great for us to of attempting it. Now the Clogwy to its irrepressible rers. Cloggy currently has climbs rated E7, one E9, our "impossible", "ungrateful" or "unjustifiable", before leaving the Dinas slate lay-by, turn round.

The delectable little crag opposite Dinas Cromlech on the south side of the pass is Dinas Mot, whose climbs rate "very severe" to E2. The other reason to look, though, is that this cliff face is one of the best places in the pass to see ravens and peregrine falcons. Ravens are common in Snowdonia, half as big again as a crow, readily identified by their deep-throated, croaking "prok prok" and habit of rolling over as they fly.

The breathtakingly fast peregrines will be hunting the lower ground and coastline until next month, but then they return to the higher crags to breed. You may also see ravens, peregrines and sleek black choughs, with their crimson legs and bills. In the Dinorwic quarries facing Llanberis, where up to 3,000 men once toiled cutting and blasting vast terraces into the bole of Eiflwr Fawr. These were the largest slate quarries in the world. They are still the most picturesque.

The quarrying, which covered 700 acres of the mountain, stopped just weeks after Dinorwic had provided the slate for the dais, throne and lectern at the Prince of Wales's 1969 investiture in Caernarfon Castle. The great faces of grey, green and blue slate have given the rock climbers a new winter practice ground.

For those with no head for heights, the fort-like quarry workshops have been turned into a slate museum; part of the old railway that carried slate down to Port Dinorwic potters on as a lakeside run for tourists (it restarts on March 2), and the Power of Wales exhibition centre by the lake can arrange a visit to the National Grid's Dinorwic pumped storage power station, buried in Eiflwr Fawr in a vault big enough to swallow a 16-storey building.

• The latest climbers' guide, Rock Climbing in Snowdonia, by Paul Williams, is published by Constable, £9.95.

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Bird brains: sleek black chough in the Dinorwic quarries



Home sweet home: Ty Hyll or "ugly house", Llanberis



Welsh welcome: fearless sheep greet visitors in the car-park

★ WHERE TO STAY ★

Climbers tend to bivouac unofficially in the Llanberis Pass below Clogwyn y Grochan or Dinas Cromlech, or to use camp sites and bed and breakfast accommodation such as Humphreys centrally heated Bunkhouse at Gwastadnant, Nant Peris (0286 870356), or the Youth Hostel at Pen-y-Pass on the site of the Gorphwysfa Hotel, where Geoffrey Winthrop Young brought his Easter climbing parties (0286 870428). There is another Youth Hostel at Llyn Celyn up Capel Goch Road, Llanberis (0286 870280).

Among Llanberis hotels the climbers' favourite is The Heights, which offers five en suite rooms and "alpine" accommodation in three dormitories, sleeping eight each. Dormitories £9 a night, £12 with breakfast. En suite £18 per person B&B. The hotel has a climbing wall free

to residents; otherwise £1 an hour (0286 871179).

Better heeled mountaineers are to be found at the Pen-y-Gwryd on the south side of the pass at the junction of the A498 and A4086, which is open at weekends only until March. There are 22 clean rooms, one with en suite

facilities. The others share four bathrooms. B&B £19, or £23 in en suite room (0286 870211 or 870768).

Those seeking more luxurious creature comforts will head for Seiont Manor Hotel, Llanrug, which has 28 en-suite bedrooms, 150 acres of parkland, salmon and trout

fishing, an indoor heated swimming pool, sauna and solarium. Single £72.50, double/twin £99.50, suites £150 to £175 (0286 673366).

The largest hotel in Llanberis is the 116-room Royal Victoria, between lakes Padarn and Peris. An Inter-Hotel, it is offering any three nights for the price of two during February. Single £33, twin/double £57, bargain breaks from April (two nights room with breakfast and dinner) £73 per person (0286 870253).

The Padarn Lake Hotel has 18 bedrooms. Single £29, double £49, two-day breaks including dinners £65 to £68 per person (0286 870260). Gally-Glyn is an AA one-star offering B&B from £16.50 (0286 870370), and Alpine Lodge is a member of Les Routiers offering en-suite accommodation for £29 single, £39 double, family rooms £49 for three or £59 for four.



Climber comfort: in the Seiont Manor Hotel at Llanrug

✕ WHERE TO EAT ✕

• The climbers' eating place and watering hole in Llanberis is Pete's Eats café, 40 High Street, where the walls are covered with photos of climbers doing impossible things, and where a "New Routes" book is maintained to fuel gossip about latest achievements and climbing scandals. A chip bunty costs £1, and the most ambitious dish, a "Big Jim" (liver, bacon, tomatoes, mushrooms, peas and

double potatoes), named in memory of the late Phil "Big Jim" Jewell, "one of Cloggy's most fervent disciples", is £6.95. Tea comes in mugs containing a pint or so (48p).

• The Heights specialises in vegetarian and wholesome food, with daily specials on a blackboard. A wholesome three-course meal costs about £9. Ansell's beers. • At Pen-y-Gwryd there are robust bar snacks at

lunchtime but in the evening, at the sound of a gong, usually at 7.30, they sit down together for a robust five-course dinner built to bely mountaineering appetites (£11). The hotel serves Bass beer and imports sherry from its own solera in Puerto Santa Maria. Must book (0286 870211/870768).

• In Llanberis Y Bistrot, 43-45 High Street, opposite Pete's Eats, has a

reputation for Nerys Roberts' homely Welsh cooking featuring local produce. Dinners only, two courses £16.50, three £19 or four £21 (0286 871278).

• The most ambitious pub food in the area is to be found at the Glynswyre, Llanys, (Ansell's) on the Llanberis-Caernarfon road, where rump steaks range from 5oz at £4.85 to a tigerish 32oz at £11.25, and there are fish and vegetarian dishes too.

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Paradise regained in Sherwood

Francesca Greenoak admires the tropical splendour of a Center Parc

Center Parc holidays offer bikes, boats, sports and walks in the woodland of Sherwood Forest, among other locations — but the principal attraction is the huge, transparent dome enclosing the semi-tropical swimming pools, chutes and artificial rapids, all grown about with exotic vegetation.

The plants are a large part of the glamour and range from tall palms, their ostrich feather fronds reaching almost to the top of the dome, to the tiny creeping figs from the curtains of climbing bougainvilleas to the stout, blue-grey olive trees and brilliant strelitzia bird of paradise flowers.

Barry Collins, the head gardener, is the young man responsible for the smooth running of the dome and outdoor planting. He explained how ideas have developed over the five years since the first Center Parc opened.

The organisation is now the largest importer of semi-tropical plants in Europe, and constantly looks for new and interesting plants or grows better-known ones in unusual ways.

In consequence the dome-greenhouse is one of the most interesting gardening phenomena in Britain today, a place to see warm-climate plants grown to perfection and to spy new ideas for house plants and domestic conservatories.

Few private owners would have room for a 36ft date palm or 24ft fan palms, such as the livingstone or washingtonia, which give height and elegance to the dome landscape. However, if they are started from smaller specimens, they grow to a more manageable 3ft or so in a warm conservatory (not falling below 10C/50F).

In dry and partially shaded parts of the dome, the long-leaved peace lily, spathiphyllum, and the glossy-leaved vine (Cissampelos) prove their worth; in normal domestic surroundings they survive poor conditions and a degree of neglect.

Plants characterised by large, broad leaves and grown for foliage effects — synagnum, anthurium and scindapsus — have forms with variegations in pinks, reds and golds; or vein patterns and spathes of startling beauty. They can be discovered in adventurous garden centres and house-plant nurseries.

Indoor gardening has a lot to offer the intrepid explorer: key points for these plants is to give reasonable light (not direct sun), not to overwater in winter, but to keep the atmosphere around the plant humid by placing the pot on an inch of wet gravel in the base of its planter.

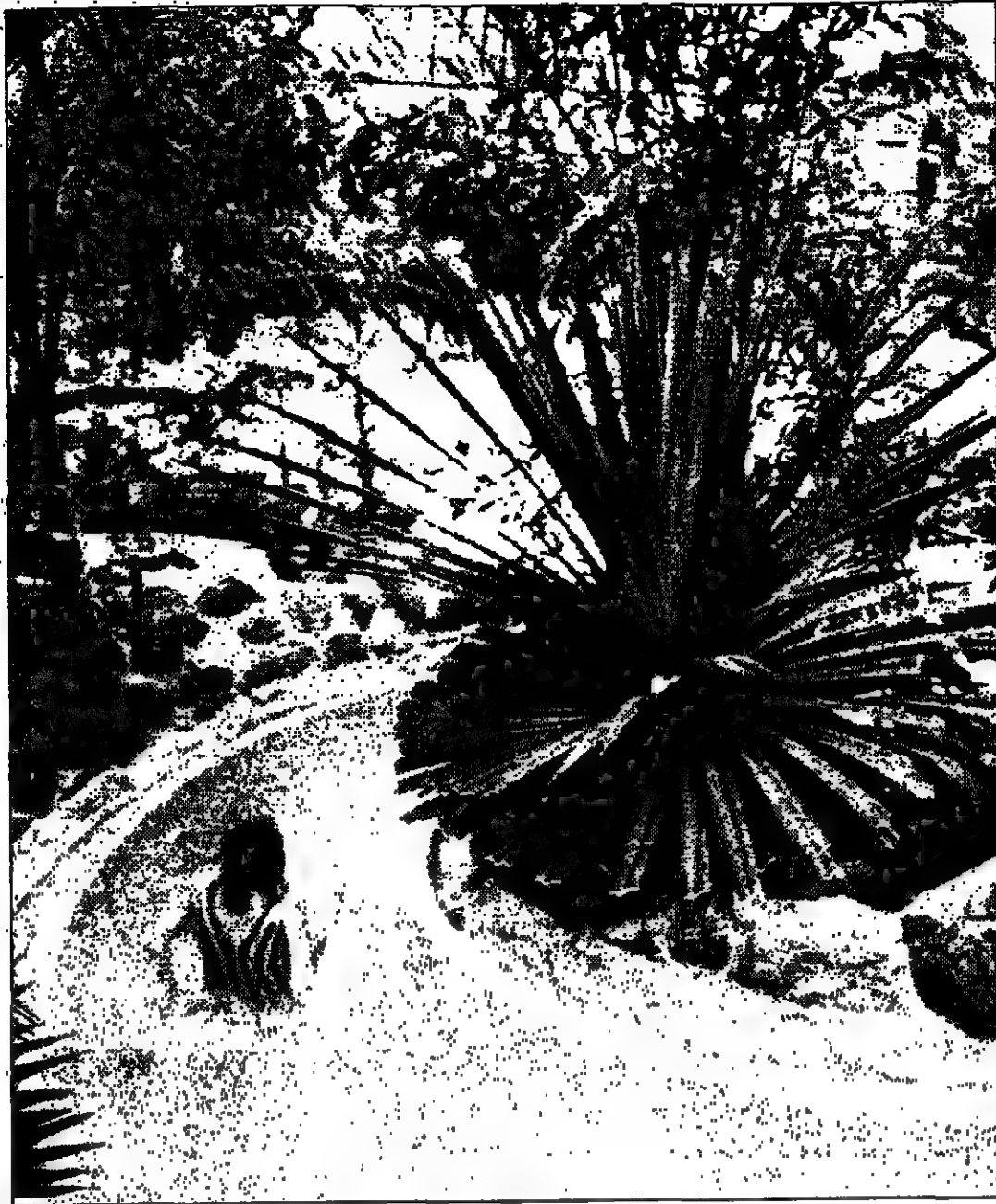
The plants in the Sherwood dome must be in prime condition. "It is hard work, because all the maintenance gardening and tidying has to be done before the dome opens, or overnight," Mr Collins says. "But you can't have flops in an all-season paradise."

All the plants are, in effect, container-grown: raised bed structures a little more than 3ft at their widest and nowhere deeper than 60cm/2ft, which are filled with a mixture of clay-loam and organic materials.

Few supports are needed because the plants brace their roots against the sides of the containers. What is required is strong healthy plants rather than a fast growth, so feeding is sparing with a fertiliser based on farmyard manure and seaweed.

Company policy in the woodland park and within the dome is to pursue environmentally-friendly horticultural procedures. In the dome it makes absolute sense: up to 300 people can be expected to be enjoying themselves there on any one day of the year, and it would be extremely unwise to use any hazardous pesticides.

So cultivation techniques are organic and pest-control is biological (using a wide range of peacock insects) — a practice which also works in warm conservatories.



Undercover operation: some of the tropical foliage that flourishes under the Center Parc domes

BEST BUYS

JUST in time for the seed-sowing season, *The Vegetable Finder* (published by HORA, Ryton-on-Dunsmore, Coventry CV8 3LE, £3.55 inc. p&hp) makes it possible to find vegetable favourites which were previously difficult to trace. Compiler Jeremy Cherfas has reviewed as many seed catalogues as possible and listed all vegetables known to be on sale, together with the supplier. This applies to such old varieties as Ragged Jack and Russian Red kales; less common varieties, such as broad-leaved endive Golden and new ones, such as Thompson and Morgan's new F1 tomato Sungold.



T&M's F1 tomato Sungold

WEEKEND TIPS

- Sow broad beans in seed trays in the greenhouse in cold areas, in cold frames or in the ground of warmer regions.
- Set potatoes, main eye upwards, in seed trays in a cool, light place, so they can make strong sprouts.
- Take cuttings from chrysanthemums growing in a greenhouse (give them an ambient temperature of 7C/45F, or put them in a propagator).
- Prune climbing roses (if not done earlier and tie in long shoots as horizontally as possible).
- Avoid walking on lawns that are white with frost.

MY PERFECT WEEKEND

We ask people in the public eye to reveal the private fantasies that would turn a weekend into 48 hours of pure magic

A.L. ROWSE
Historian



Where would you go? At my disgracefully advanced age (88) I am rather stuck in Cornwall, but I should like to go back once more for a weekend at my famous and beloved old Oxford college — All Souls; particularly to see old friends like Douglas Jay, Quintin Hailsham and Roger Sherfield. Marooned on my Cornish headland I feel out of touch with things.

How would you get there? I always loved driving up from Cornwall by road; not so much by the new motorways but by the old, historic main roads that took one through such fascinating country — the Devon-Somerset border, the Wiltshire-Berkshire Downs. Such lovely places to picnic.

Where would you stay? In college. Nowhere better.

Who would be your perfect companion? My old Oxford friend David Treffy, at present also stuck in Cornwall as high sheriff. We share the same tastes — seeing historic places, churches, National Trust showplaces.

What essentials would you take? A rug; maps of course.

Which, if any, medicines? I find Seven Seas cod-liver oil pills pep me up, especially in winter.

What would you have to eat? As an old master of that by no means exclusive club, the Ducal Club, I have to be abstemious. But All Souls' cooking was always good; one could pick and choose.

What would you drink? Though I have lived most of my life over one of the best cellars in Oxford, it meant nothing to me. Like Dr Johnson, I am a tea addict.

What would you like to read? Something French for a change. Collette perhaps. But I am always re-reading Jane Austen.

What three things would you most like to do? One, revisit the Bodleian Library, where I did so much

research and found Shakespeare's Dark Lady lying in wait for me. Two, revisit the Ashmolean Museum to see its latest acquisitions. Three, walk round my favourite Merton College garden, or Addison's Walk at Magdalen.

What music would you enjoy? I should like to hear the cathedral service at Christ Church once more, or evensong at New College.

What would you watch on television? I do not watch television, though I sometimes appear on it.

What luxury would you take? I do not go in for luxuries.

Your least welcome guest? Some ghastly leftist politician, like Tony Benn, or horrible modernist poet, like Allen Ginsberg.

What three things would you leave behind? Three of my books for libraries.

To whom would you send a postcard? To Phyllis, my housekeeper.

What souvenir would you bring home? A book I couldn't get in Cornwall.

What would you like to find when you got home? My loving little cat, Flippy. But, alas, sex raised its ugly head and one right he went out across the fields and got killed.

Interview by Rosanna Greenstreet

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All the world is his canvas

Kay Marles takes a voyage round four-year-old Seth Royston's bedroom wall

me & my decorator

When Susan Royston opened the XYZ boutique in Hampstead, north-west London, she wanted it to have its own distinctive personality. It already had a lot of her personality through her choice of clothes, jewellery, belts and bags. But for her interior she wanted something very different.

"That was in the mid 1980s," she says, "and I wanted a feeling of warmth and comfort that people would enjoy and remember and want to return to."

Today XYZ is regarded as one of the chicest of Hampstead's many shops. The walls are painted in muted shades of grey, blue, green and tangerine, with strong designs of triangles, circles and semi-circles outlined in dark grey or black.

They were painted by Richard Walker, who answered Mrs Royston's advertisement in *Interiors* magazine.

An artist herself and a graduate of St Martin's College of Art, central London, she sensed immediately that they were on the same wavelength.

"His portfolio was mostly of New York street scenes and buildings and his style was just right for me," she says.

Together they produced a set of drawings and Mr Walker set about creating an original piece of work around the walls.

The foray into wall paintings was a first for Mr Walker, who works from a riverside studio in Lewes, Sussex. His paintings today sell for up to £6,000 and his works are shown at the Jill George (formerly the Thumb) Gallery in London, and the Madison Galleries in Los Angeles.

When Mrs Royston bought a house in Hampstead Garden Suburb, north London, five years ago, it seemed natural not only to hang her collection of Mr Walker's paintings there, but also to get him to paint some of the rooms.

Mrs Royston's house was built in 1907 by Mackay Hugh Baillie Scott—a contemporary of Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Built as a "farmhouse cottage", it is full of well-preserved architectural details and features of its period. All the walls on the upper floor are angled up into the eaves. Other interesting details include an octagonal study, three well-preserved oak newel posts on the central stairway, and original brick and mosaic fireplaces.



Cartoon fun: artist Richard Walker and Susan Royston in the colourful round-the-world bedroom they created for Seth at the house in Hampstead Garden Suburb

Mrs Royston has been at pains to restore the original features and furnish the house in a simple style in keeping with its design.

Mr Walker decorated a downstairs cloakroom with painted "stained glass" windows in the style of Antonio Gaudi, after a visit to the Sagrada Família cathedral, and painted an upstairs bathroom in black and white line drawings inspired by Egyptian hieroglyphics. He then turned his attention to a nursery for the baby Mrs Royston was expecting.

"I knew that the theme would be the world," he says. "I was travelling a lot at the time and I wanted to do something that was going to be educational as well as fun."

He settled on a mural called "The World in a Room", which fills the wall just above the bed. Using primary and secondary colours—neither of them wanted

it to be blue or pink, they say—he has created a cartoon-style journey around the world.

"I wanted to paint something that the child could look at while he was growing up," he says. "So while there are recognisable symbols like the Eiffel Tower and the Taj Mahal, I also painted in a lot of small detail."

Working closely with Mrs Royston, the mural quickly evolved from early sketches. The cartoon

starts with an imaginary English home with cows in the fields, and moves on through Europe to India, China, Japan, the Sydney Opera House, Hollywood, New York and back to London.

The walls are alive with people and jokes—there is a Frenchman in a beret selling onions, a cross-Channel swimmer about to dive, a body-builder in Australia, graffiti on the New York subway and whaling off the Caribbean islands.

Mrs Royston is delighted to have got well away from the cute frills that normally decorate a children's room. "I think it's great," she says. "It's quirky and nicely blended and it's just as appealing to an adult as to a child."

Her son Seth, now four, loves it. "It's his and that's how he thinks of it. I sometimes hear him talking to the cowboy on the horse in the Texan drawing," she says.



Nerve centre: 1943 and our secret heroes race to crack the Enigma codes in the huts at Bletchley Park

New mission for the wartime code-breakers

About 50 miles north of London and midway between Oxford and Cambridge lies the town of Bletchley. It seems an unremarkable, even uninteresting place. But outward appearances can be deceptive. A few years ago Bletchley was unmasked as the nerve centre of allied operations during the second world war.

Known as the Code and Cipher school, the boffins based at Bletchley Park, in the grounds of a Victorian manor house, were responsible for intercepting and deciphering coded enemy messages—particularly those sent in the supposedly unbreakable German "Enigma" codes.

As F.H. Hinsley points out in his five-volume official history, *British Intelligence in the Second World War* (HMSO), the Germans had reason to be confident in Enigma, which was produced by a special coding machine.

"Instructions for arranging and setting the wheels could be changed as frequently as every 24 hours," Mr Hinsley wrote. "Any one not knowing the setting was faced with the problem of choosing from 150 million, million, million solutions."

What the Germans did not know was that just before the war the British authorities had obtained from Poland a copy of an Enigma machine. Initially by hand, and later with the aid of specially-developed deciphering machines, Bletchley Park's code-breakers managed to keep pace with the increasingly sophisticated German codes.

In *Top Secret Ultra* (Cassell, 1980), Peter Calvocoressi, like F.H. Hinsley a veteran of Bletchley Park, judges that information intercepted and deciphered there contributed to some of the allies' most important victories, including the Battle of Britain, the Battle of the Atlantic and the North Africa campaign.

At the height of its wartime contribution in January 1945, Bletchley Park operated almost as a town in its own right, employing 3,995 people.

Veterans are in revolt against government plans for Bletchley Park

Among them was Gordon Welchman who, in his 1982 book *The Hut 6 Story* (Allen Lane, 1982), wrote: "Many of us look back to Bletchley Park days as the best period of our lives. It has been a real trial that until recently we have been unable to discuss our activities there."

Now it seems that the only thanks the government intends to give the code-breakers for their pioneering work, and the years of loyal silence that followed, is to send in the bulldozers. Although the manor house is to be preserved, the government's Property Holdings, which owns the 50-acre site jointly with British Telecom (BT), intends to sell off the grounds for redevelopment.

Is there any justification for preserving the huts that were home to the code-breakers? Visiting the site it would be difficult at first to guess its wartime importance—one of the reasons, no doubt, that the secret was so well kept for so long.

Some of the original high metal fencing around the site remains, but it is hemmed in by new developments and a main road. The house is now a training centre for BT and there are several other buildings, including one belonging to the Civil Aviation Authority. There is little overall sense of an integrated complex of period buildings.

Yet at the heart of the site some of the huts remain, including Hut 6, which was used for deciphering army and air force codes, and next to it Hut 3, the most famous of them all. It was here that intercepted, coded information was sorted and given priority.

"They may not look much," Ted Enever, chairman of the steering committee for the Bletchley Park

Trust which was formed to try to preserve the site, says. "But if they hadn't been there, we wouldn't have won the war."

The trust is putting forward its own business plan for the park, which includes the creation and development of a museum of cryptography and computing. "Colossus", the world's first electronic, programmable computer, was developed at Bletchley during the war.

The museum would be housed in the huts and supported by conference facilities in the manor house, and by other accommodation and services for high-tech computer and telecommunications companies.

The plan may have a chance of success. Writing privately to Baroness Trumpington, who served at Bletchley Park, Douglas Hurd, the foreign secretary, recently conceded: "Property Holdings are discussing with the local planning authority and the Science Museum the prospects for turning Bletchley Park House into a museum, and relocating at least some of the more important huts in its immediate grounds."

Clearly, the government is hoping for a compromise. But the trust argues that there is not enough room in the manor house's "immediate grounds" for the huts.

The trust's proposal is obviously a less straightforward (and less profitable) option than simply selling the land for development. "We do appreciate that this would require heavy investment and that this is maybe not the best time in the world," Mr Enever says. "But we can't just sit here and wait for the historic content of the park to be swept away."

With a distinguished membership and friends in high places, the trust will not easily let the memory of Bletchley Park fade. The government's mistake has been to propose demolition of the huts after, not before, it sanctioned publication of the official history of British wartime intelligence.

CALLUM MURRAY

Treasure in the deep south

The quaint terrace house shown on the right is for sale at £6,962 in the medieval village of Drapia, about 20 minutes inland from the Calabrian coast at Tropea, an hour from the airport at Lamezia.

The old house, in honey-coloured stone, is known locally as Casa Delle Due Sorelle (House of the Two Sisters). It is structurally sound with 12in thick walls, but requires restoration and connection to mains water and electricity. Built on three levels, it has one large room on each floor with balconies, and an attic above which could be converted to provide an extra bedroom or bathroom.

The UK agent is Brian A. French & Associates, 12 High Street, Knaresborough, North Yorkshire (0423 867047 or 071-284 0114).

Calabria is the southernmost province of Italy, and perhaps the least known. It remains largely undiscovered by British house-hunters. Prices are low and there is a good range of property.

Almost all of Calabria is mountainous, lush and forested in parts, fringed by some of the longest, broadest, least polluted beaches in Italy. It has almost 300 miles of coastline, many picturesque towns and villages.

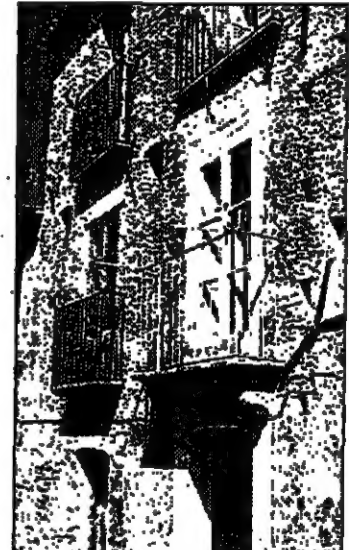


Buyers' Italy CALABRIA

and a beautifully forested highland region called the Sila, just east of the Calabrian capital, Cosenza.

Wolves and boar roam the densely wooded mountains at the heart of the Sila, and there are good facilities for walking and climbing in summer, and skiing in winter. The southern tip of Calabria, between the mountains and the sea, is one of Italy's most fertile regions, famous for jasmene and bergamot used in the production of perfumes, and for citrus fruits.

There has been some development on the scenic western coast, mostly purpose-built holiday villages around the lovely cliff-top town of Tropea, with its narrow streets and tall, shuttered houses, adorned with brightly coloured geraniums.



Play a balcony scene at Drapia

Newly-built coastal properties here, within sight of the volcano island of Stromboli and Sicily's northern coast, are sought-after by Italian buyers, and tend to be more expensive than traditional homes. Prices start around £40,000 for a small seaside villa, with a veranda, roof terrace and a small garden.

In the inland villages unrestored houses, typically two-up-two-down plus an attic and ornate wrought-iron balconies, but no garden, can be found for as little as £6,000. A larger town house in good condition, with a modernised kitchen and bath, terrace and a garden, will set you back around £35,000.

A remote house without neighbours in this part of southern Italy may entail a certain amount of risk from robbers. However, Calabria is not totally lawless, and most properties for sale are close to villages and perfectly safe.

Large country houses in need of renovation, with an acre or two of vines and fruit trees, can be found for around £70,000. A little peasant house, fully restored, with two double bedrooms, sitting-room, kitchen and bath, is currently for sale at £14,421 near the old village of Daffina, about three miles inland (through Brian French and Associates).

The airport at Lamezia, about an hour's drive north of Tropea, operates internationally during the summer months, with flights from many UK airports. There are year-round daily domestic flights from Rome, with connecting flights to Heathrow and Gatwick.

CHERYL TAYLOR

Heap of the week: Revesby Abbey

Charm on a grand scale

Michael Heseltine said he was considering serving a repairs notice on Revesby Abbey, in Lincolnshire, as long ago as 1981, but it took his successors six years to gird themselves into action. By then, Revesby had been empty and decaying for more than 20 years, the subject of repeated attempts to demolish, despite its Grade I listing.

English Heritage then moved swiftly to carry out a substantial programme of major repairs and sent the £119,000 bill to the owner. Shortly afterwards the house was sold with ten acres to FIL, a property company, but since then water has begun again to seep through the roof, bringing plasterwork crashing down over the stairs. Recently East Lindsey district council has become so concerned that it is considering a further repairs notice if the roof is not patched up.

For their part the present owners can say it has taken a frustratingly long time to obtain consent. Though planning permission was granted in December 1990, the final legal agreements are only now being tied up.

Requests were made not only for detailed plans, but for a land survey, specifying what plants would be planted where. Farouq Sheikh of FIL now says: "In the



Communal living: plans for Revesby Abbey involve 28 small apartments sharing the main rooms

present climate we cannot begin work without a very substantial grant from English Heritage."

His plans do not apportion the main rooms among a number of large units, as Kit Martin has done in similar country house schemes. Instead they are kept for communal use. This is a fine idea, but necessitates a substantial service charge, which FIL believes is better shared among 28 smaller apartments in the main house and a further 15 mews houses in the stable courtyard. "Most of our previous experience has been in London where you must make use of every square foot, the main house at Revesby has 35,000

square feet," Mr Sheikh says. Revesby is announced by a splendid screen of iron railings on the A155 from Tattershall to Spilsby, but the house is well set back and largely secluded among trees.

It was one of a group of Lincolnshire houses (the others are Stoke Rochford, Raucby, and a part of Harlaxton) built to the designs of the prolific Scottish architect, William Burn. He was a pioneer of the Elizabethan and Jacobean revivals and his houses are marked by an almost feminine charm and delicacy of detail. He was a master of country house planning. "He knew his clients,

the minutiae of their regularly ordered lives, their desire for privacy both from their servants and their constant round of guests," says Burn's biographer, David Walker.

Revesby was built in 1843-44, soon after Burn had moved to London, for J. Banks Stanhope. The style is Jacobethan—a riot of bay windows, oriel, shaped gables, finials and barley sugar chimneys. Inside there is handsome panelling and plasterwork, not only in 1600 style but opulent Baroque as well.

MARCUS BINNEY
For further information contact Mr Farouq Sheikh (0923 835222)

BBC 1

- 7.35 Open University (7800793)**
8.10 Playdays at the Why Bird Stop (7872580)
9.10 News and weather (5674248)
9.15 Getting Through. Viscount Tonypanny tells how he coped with the news, the treatment and the fears of having a life-threatening disease (1774083)
9.30 This Is The Day. Graham Young meets Dana and Jimmy Cricket (83267)
10.00 Sea Heart Magazine for hearing impaired (18539). Wales (to 11.00)
See You Sunday 10.30 Deutscher Direkt! German for beginners (7) (5616538) 10.55 **Advice Shop** Extra! Consumer advice from Helen Madden (799335)
11.00 Olympic Grandstand Desmond Lynam introduces live coverage of the men's downhill from Val d'Isère. Diane Vinodis provides the commentary (46557) 12.57 **Weather** (9021226)
1.00 News (5385638)
1.05 On the Record. Scottish secretary Ian Lang discusses the government's plans for Scotland (2253170)
2.00 EastEnders (Ceelex) (a) (1) (19257)
3.00 Columbo. The demands of his stunning wife become too much for an accountant and he begins embarking to maintain her extravagant life style (8075286) 4.10 **Cartoon Double Bill** with Duffy Duck (592489)
4.25 Biteback. Julian Pettifer introduces the monthly show that puts television programme makers in the hot seat. (Ceelex) (609980)
5.05 The Clothes Show. Duncan Goodhew is among those modelling men's swimwear for Sainsbury's; and how a small Irish family firm became the producer of a million T-shirts a week (2232712)
5.30 Antiques Roadshow introduced by Hugh Scully from the Civic Hall in Stratford-upon-Avon. (Ceelex) (261996) 5.15 **Play It Safe!** with Annika Rice (104731)
6.25 News with Chris Lowe. Weather (207257)
6.50 Songs of Praise from the chapel of Trinity Hospice and Holy Trinity Church in south London (Ceelex) (a) (608880)
7.15 Snooker. Eamonn Holmes introduces live coverage of the Benson and Hedges Masters final from Wembley Conference Centre (124118)
7.45 Lovejoy: Benin Bronze. The roguish antique dealer is under suspicion when a priceless bronze goes missing. (Ceelex) (a) (562327)
8.35 As Time Goes By. Jean is still peevish at discovering Lionel's overnight accommodation in Norwich. (Ceelex) (a) (324482)
9.05 One Foot In The Grave. Margaret is haunted by a chilling nightmare that suggests she is planning to murder Victor (Ceelex) (a) (562327)
9.40 News with Marilyn Lewis. Weather (246828)
9.55 Snooker. Eamonn Holmes presents the continuation of the Benson and Hedges Masters final (886199)
10.25 Everyman
 ● CHOICE: A report from the Anglican diocese of London, pegged to the arrival of a new bishop, contains the startling assertion that 35 per cent of its clergy are homosexual. The claim is made by a female curate who uses it to help explain the church's hostility towards women priests. Like his predecessor, Bishop David Hope is opposed to the ordination of women, though he says so in more mollifying language. At any rate the liberal wing of the church is prepared to welcome his arrival. Even the woman curate thinks the traditionalists may be in for a shock. The film reveals a church desperately divided, not only on women priests but on the "decade of evangelism" and, indeed, the issue of homosexuality. Not surprisingly Bishop Hope describes coming to London as the hardest decision of his life: "My heart sank rather than there was an element of gloom about the prospect." (202489)
11.05 Olympics '82. Helen Rollason introduces a roundup of the day's action (452189)
12.20am Mahabharat (7) (5046769) 1.00 **Weather** (4822213)



The new man in the hot seat: Bishop David Hope (10.25pm)

BBC 2

- 6.35 Open University: Maths Methods - II** - conditioning 7.00 Statistics: Pictures of Data 7.35 **Modelling and the Modelling Cycle** 7.50 **Motion and Newton's Laws** 8.15 **Animal Physiology: The Pigeon** 8.40 **Instruments - Made to Measure** 8.55 **Body Plans** 9.30 **The Necessity for History** 9.55 **Measuring the Earth and the Moon** 10.20 **The Clinical Psychologist** 10.45 **Issues in Women's Studies** 11.10 **From Child to Pupil** 11.35 **Practical Conservation: Urban Habitats** (5917625)
12.00 Around Westminster. Laurie Mayer presents the weekly political review (60022) Wales: Scrutiny
12.30 Celtic: The Third Test. Highlights of the fourth day's play between New Zealand and England from Wellington (85625)
1.00 Olympic Grandstand. Action centres on the ski-jumping at Courchevel; the men's luge; the men's downhill and the women's 15 kilometre cross-country (20373)
3.00 Snooker. Eamonn Holmes introduces the opening session of the final of the Benson and Hedges Masters from Wembley Conference Centre (24009)
5.00 Rugby Special. Chris Rea introduces highlights of Northants v Bath and Wasps v Harlequins (a) (5564). Wales: Pontypool v Newbridge, Cardiff v Swansea
6.00 Olympics Today. Desmond Lynam introduces coverage of the men's downhill (253070)
6.35 The Money Programme. Tom Maddock reports on the shake up of Britain's postal service, threatened by the EC's decision to question the Post Office's monopoly (18077)
7.15 The Natural World: Sharks - on their Best Behaviour. Mike de Sève's film celebrates the fascinating behaviour and diversity of these creatures (a) (204441)
8.05 Goodbye Comrades. Seven years ago citizens of the Soviet Union were filmed for the series *Comrades*. In the first of two programmes they are revisited to discover how they have fared during the historic events since (Ceelex) (899373)
8.55 Tying Ties: The Visit. Another take on modern-day America (334441)
9.25 Did You See...? Presented by Jeremy Paxman. Journalist Ann Leslie reviews Elizabeth R. the cartoonist Bill Tidy comments on the Variety Club Award 1991 and Australian comedienne and writer Kathy Lette discusses *thirtysomething* (247539)
10.00 Screen Two: The Lost Language of Cranes (1992)
 ● CHOICE: There is no better actress than Eileen Atkins to portray a woman suffering. What is another way of saying that she is perfectly cast as the middle-aged writer in Sean Matthews' adaptation of the novel by the American writer David Levitt. Atkins has much to agonise about, when first her son (Angus Macfadyen) and then her husband (Brian Cox) reveal that they are homosexual. That we know before she does only increases the impact of her revelations. The strength of the production lies in handling explosive material in an honest and low-key way. The performances are all excellent and the director Nigel Finch underlines them with a bold visual style not often seen in television films. The piece may leave too much hanging in the air but we have come a long way since the first tentative steps towards handling homosexuality in the British cinema (8808)
11.30 Film: Heartbreakers (1994). Peter Coyote and Nick Mancuso as best friends obsessed with ambition and money. The performance is just about carry a rambling story. Directed by Bobby Roth (83625)
1.00am Rapido. Music magazine (7) (4907381). Ends at 1.35



Simenon's dogged detective: Michael Gambon (8.45pm)

- 8.45 Malignant**
 ● CHOICE: Nearly 30 years after Rupert Davies struck his last match, Simenon's dogged detective returns in the ample person of Michael Gambon. It goes without saying that Gambon's interpretation is not Davies'. Puriests may object that Gambon's Malignant is not Simenon's either. He has the bulk of the part but is a shade too jocular and too expensive. But many people will not have seen Davies or read the books and Gambon is a strong enough actor to impose himself on the part. More contentious is the decision to shoot in Budapest and pretend it is Paris. The cities are different in style and it shows. Tonight's story, setting our man on the trail of Jewish slaves, comes from the *Chroniques de Warlam* of writer Alain Fuster and director James Clavel Jones. It is an excellent production but a little long. The stories are better at an hour, which is what they will become from next week. (84373)
10.15 News and weather (644335) 10.30 **LWT Weather** (455606)
10.35 The South Bank Show: Colin Thubron. Melvyn Bragg presents a profile of the celebrated travel writer, as he looks for the heart of Uzbekistan (270815)
11.35 Hooked. The third of six programmes on drugs. A look at the anomalies in the way drug-related crimes are treated (169880)
12.10am Cue The Music. Big Country in concert in Moscow (a) (8421823)
1.10 The ITV Chart Show (7) (a) (5885294)
2.15 Film: The Diplomatic Corp (1958) starring Robin Bailey. This drive to make a crime reporter trying to solve a diplomatic murder. Directed by Montgomery Tully (585749) 3.25 **Pick Of The Week** (7) (3087652)
3.55 Film: One Jump Ahead (b/w, 1955) starring Paul Carpenter. Routine thriller about a reporter who turns detective on a murder case. Directed by Charles Saunders (800655)
5.00 Soap. More continuation with the Campbells (7) (77132) 5.30 **ITN Morning News** (15229). Ends at 6.00

ITV

- 6.00 TV-am** (9576441) 8.25 **Disney Club** presented by John Eccleston and Andrea Boardman (746877)
10.45 Link Disabled novelist Christine Marion Fraser talks to Sian Vasey about her writing and her life. (Oracle) (719335)
11.00 Morning Worship from St Mary's Church, Bushbury, Wolverhampton (61118)
12.00 Encounter. The tragic life of Cambridge historian Margaret Spufford who has suffered with osteoporosis for 20 years and whose daughter died in her early 20s after a life-long battle against cystinosis (80828)
12.30 LWT News Weekend (340064) 12.55 **LWT Weather** (80286354)
1.00 News and weather (7820261)
1.10 Walden. Brian Walden's guest is the shadow environment secretary Bryan Gould (a) (3355575)
2.00 Sharp's Funday! Pat Sharp introduces an episode of *Batman* featuring Anne Baxter and *Wrestling from America* (8205977)
2.50 Dinosaurs. Puppet series (a) (2465195)
3.20 The Match. The Rumbelows Cup semi-final first leg between Nottingham Forest and Tottenham Hotspur at the City Ground, Nottingham. The commentator is Brian Moore (a) (9892460)
5.30 Bullseye. Darts and general knowledge quiz game (a) (977)
6.00 Animal Country. In the last programme, Gerald and Lee Durrell choose the animal champion of the series (a) (118)
6.30 News and weather (507064) 6.35 **LWT News** (503335)
6.40 Highway. Sir Harry Secombe visits the parish of Appin and amore on the west coast of Scotland (Oracle) (450248)
7.15 You've Been Framed! Jeremy Beadle with another selection of amateur out-takes (119286)
7.45 The Darling Days of May. Does Charley have reason to be jealous of the blond stranger who comes calling? Starring David Jason and Pam Ferris (Oracle) (a) (895441)

CHANNEL 4

- 6.00 Trans World Sport.** Sporting news and features (7) (71170) 7.00 **Eurobeat's Castle.** Carbons and music for the under-fives (751877)
7.30 Star Street. Children's drama serial (723480) 7.55 **The Wild Bunch.** Felipe puppet series (7213151) 8.25 **Ramona** (7) (8912064)
8.55 Little Rosey. Cartoon fun (4534286)
9.25 The Sword of Tipu Sultan. Indian drama serial. In Hindi with English subtitles (171199)
10.00 Dispatches. A documentary on the health dangers in later life facing inactive children (7) (355703)
10.45 Dances. Animation (1717877)
11.00 Dances. The story of a teenage runner with Down's syndrome. (Teletext) (7) (6064)
11.30 Flipper. Classic serial about a lovable dolphin (7793)
12.00 Little House on the Prairie. Drama series about life in the Midwest in the 1880s (7) (89828)
1.00 Voyage To The Bottom Of The Sea. Classic underwater adventure series about a remarkable submarine (2054809)
1.55 Open On 4: War and Peace. The Seattle Opera production of Prokofiev's work, based on the novel by Tolstoy. Directed by Francesco Zambello and conducted by Mark Ermler with a cast including Vladimir Chernov, Nikolai Okhtomikov and Sheri Greenwald (a) (1376798) 5.55 **News and weather** (555793)
6.00 Teenage Health Freak. Comedy series set in Britain about the growing pains of an adolescent (7) (480)
6.30 The Wonder Years. Comedy series set in 1960s America about the growing pains of an adolescent (7) (712)
7.00 Fragile Earth.
 ● CHOICE: Here is a classic scenario of the claims of the environment against the needs of people. On the one hand is an attractive area of untouched woodland, a resting place for more than a million migratory birds as well as a permanent home for many rare species. On the other is desperate poverty and the demand of local people for a better life. But the farming and tourism that might provide one are a direct threat to the eco-system. The dilemma has been chartered many times in television documentaries. The novelty of this one is that the location is not in the third world but on the continent of Europe. Donana is a national park in the south-west of Spain. Ecologists give it no more than ten years. Locals ask bitterly whether the authorities are prepared to save the birds and let them starve to death. Made by Jack Bellamy and Ashley Bruce of Central Television, the film is a model of clear and even-handed reporting (8347)
8.00 Whicker's World - Down Under. Alan Whicker's look at antipodean life in the 70s. Tonight he meets Lang Hancock who had made a personal fortune of over £200 million from iron ore deposits found on his land (7) (719)
8.30 On the Edge: Movements in Time. A new series which asks why improvisation in music is important and how the improvisation has been passed down through the centuries (a) (39138)
9.30 Burning Books. This week a review of Carl Hiaasen's *Native Tongue*; the best of Latin American short stories; Goyelles by Czechoslovakian photographer Josef Koudelka and a profile of Jonathan Miller (85537)
10.00 Film: The Mouse that Roared (1959). Daffy duck with three parts for Peter Sellers in the role of a minister of a tiny European country decides to take on the might of the American army. Directed by Jack Arnold. (Teletext) (433644)
11.35 Film: Forget Mozart (1985). Foolish German drama about the death of Mozart and those who could have killed him. Directed by Mikael Lutner (a) (438825). Ends at 1.15am

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The numbers now appearing next to each TV programme listing are Video PlusCodes, which allow you to instantly programme your VCR to record with a VideoPlus+ remote. VideoPlus+ can be used with most video. Tap in the Video PlusCode for the programme you wish to record. For more details call VideoPlus on 025 12104 (calls charged at 45p per minute peak, 30p off-peak) or visit VideoPlus. VTM Ltd, 77 Fulham Palace Road, London W8 8JA. VideoPlus+, Pluscode (P) and Video Programmer are trademarks of Gemstar Marketing Ltd

ITV VARIATIONS

- ANGLIA**
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BBC 1

- 6.35 **Open University:** Reaching and Grasping Light 7.00 **Curves** from Parameters (7055779)
- 7.25 **News and weather** (805445)
- 7.30 **Crystal Tipps and Allstars:** Animation (r) (1031972) 7.35 **Wiz Bang:** Fun and laughter for the young (s) (3927359) 7.45 **The Jetsons:** Space-age cartoon series (r) (2049534)
- 8.05 **Eggs 'n' Baker:** Cheryl Baker learns about Japanese table manners and samples brown duck sushi (s) (8978359) 8.35 **Thundercats:** Cartoon adventures (r) (8545514)
- 9.00 **Going Live!** Presented by Philip Schofield and Sarah Greene. The guests include actor Ian McKellen, American singer Amy Grant, *Newsround's* Juliet Morris, and Emma Forbes who cooks a Kashmiri curry (s) (9158214) 12.12 **Weather** (8943021)
- 12.15 **Grandstand** introduced by Steve Rider. The line-up is (subject to alteration): 12.20 Cricket: highlights of the third day's play in the third Test between New Zealand and England in Wellington; 12.45, 1.20 and 1.55 Racing from Newbury; 1.00 News; 1.05 Football: a review of the FA Cup fourth round ties; 1.35 and 1.10 Snooker: semi-finals of the Benson and Hedges Masters from Wembley 2.45 Rugby League: action from a Six Nations Challenge Cup second round game; 3.55 Winter Olympics: live coverage of the opening ceremony from Albertville in the French Alps (7872408)
- 5.50 **News and weather** (509599)
- 6.00 **Regional News** (804311)
- 6.05 **Noel's House Party:** Noel Edmonds plays host to Bruno Brookes, Liz Kershaw and Henry Sandon, the ceramic expert of the *Antiques Roadshow* (s) (727729)
- 6.55 **Big Break:** Snooker and general knowledge quiz hosted by Jim Davidson with John Virgo. The contestants are helped by Steve James, Allison Fisher and Willie Thorne (CeeFax) (s) (838408)
- 7.25 **The Paul Daniels Magic Show:** The diminutive magician is joined by Martin Daniels, John Inman and the Russian Gennadi Kij, who blends dance, mime and juggling skills. (CeeFax) (s) (220565)
- 8.10 **Moon And Some Nearly Nearly Departed:** Gladys her life is threatened when an elderly lady remembers awkward facts about a woman's death 20 years earlier. Starring Millicent Martin and John Michie. (CeeFax) (s) (479717)

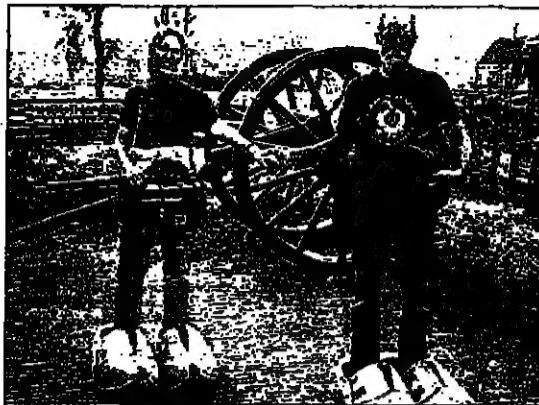


Consumer newshounds: Esther Rantzen and team (9.00pm)

- 9.00 **That's Life!** Esther Rantzen and her team presents their usual mix of investigations and humour along with the continuing search for a new singing star. (CeeFax) (301853)
- 9.45 **News and weather** (509599)
- 10.05 **Midnight Callers:** Jack (Gary Cole) is understandably shattered when the delicious Devon (Wendy Kilbourne) decides to marry Richard Clark and is tempted to take her show to national radio (s) (505088)
- 10.55 **Olympics '92:** Introduced by Desmond Lynam. The 16th Winter Olympic Games begin with ice hockey. Switzerland meet the gold medalists in the past two Olympics, the Soviet Union, now called the United Team (83374039)
- 11.00 **Weather** (402841)

BBC 2

- 6.40 **Open University:** Reaching and Grasping Light 7.05 **The Albert Memorial** 7.30 **James Hutton:** geologist 7.55 **Before Einstein** 8.45 **The Creation of Childhood** 9.10 **Disappearing Childhood** 9.35 **Work and Society** 10.00 **Henry IV parts one and two** workshop 10.25 **Instruments:** Made to Measure 10.50 **Panel Painting** 11.15 **An Introduction to Economics** 11.40 **Managing Change** at Jaguar 12.05 **Business:** Takeover 12.30 **Communication and Education:** Describing the Middle Ages 12.55 **Practical Conservation** for Land Managers 1.45 **Valued Environments:** Environmental Values 2.35 **Managing Schools:** Penalties and Incentives (13066)
- 3.00 **Mahabharata:** Epic Indian drama. In Hindi with English subtitles (3540392)
- 3.40 **Film:** *Southern Yankee* (b/w, 1948). Red Skelton stars as a simple Yankee who in a very inferior remake of Buster Keaton's *The General*. Directed by Edward Sedgwick (665061)
- 5.10 **Late Again:** Highlights from this week's *The Late Show* (s) (370059)
- 5.55 **Snooker:** Eamon Holmes presents highlights of the first semi-final of The Benson and Hedges Masters from the Wembley Conference Centre (273885)
- 6.45 **News with Moira Stuart:** Sport and weather (100798)
- 7.00 **Tortilleria Masterclass:** The final programme of the series, shown in memory of the great French chef who died in December 1990. He takes Sophie Harris and Richard Blomquist through the Debussy Sonata and then, with Christopher Hoyle and Oren Shavin, through a performance of his own Sonata Breve (r) (197446)



Dutch courage: Chris Simon and Les Blank on tour (7.50pm)

- 7.50 **Fine Cut**
- CHOICE: The series of feature-length documentaries continues with an offering by Les Blank about American director Europe. There are 40 of them, taking a latter-day grand tour by bus and rattling through 22 cities in ten countries in a couple of weeks. It is a subject easy to mock but Blank resists the temptation. The fact that he and his editor, Chris Simon, were using the trip as their honeymoon has something to do with his good-natured treatment. With help on the soundtrack from Fats Waller, Bob Dylan and Bo Diddley, the Globus Gateway bus takes its camera-clicking cargo through Cologne and Heidelberg, and on to cuckoo clocks in the Black Forest and yodeling in Tyrol. The star of the show, curiously, is none of the 40 Americans but the British courier, an urbane and intelligent man who describes himself as a combination of actor, theatrical manager and dictator in velvet gloves. (141082)
- 8.15 **Moving Pictures:** Tonight's programme includes an interview with writer and director James Toback and a film made by Dusan Makavejev about the cinema of the Yugoslav civil war (807214)
- 10.05 **Film:** *Exposed* (1993) starring Nastassja Kinski and Rudolf Nureyev. Flashy thriller about a top fashion model who is drawn into the world of terrorism after falling in love with a violent and dubious dancer. Directed by James Toback (372972)
- 11.40 **Film:** *The Big Bang* (1989). Documentary in which people from all walks of life, including a film producer and a concentration camp survivor, are asked for their views on life. Directed by James Toback (377773). Ends at 1.00am

VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCode

The numbers now appearing next to video programmes listing are Video PlusCode numbers, which allow you to instantly programme your video recorder with a VideoPlus+ handset. VideoPlus+ can be used with most videos. Tap in the Video PlusCode for the programme you wish to watch. For more details call VideoPlus on 0800 121204 (calls charged at 49p per minute plus 33p off-peak) or write to VideoPlus+, VPO Ltd, 77 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 8JA. VideoPlus+, Pluscode (P) and Video Programme are trademarks of Gannett Marketing Ltd.

ITV

- 6.00 **TV-am** (061609)
- 9.25 **Motormouth:** Neil Buchanan meets Britain's most famous fox, Micky Gaby Rolin talks to Jamie Adair about the Variety Club of Great Britain; and the winners of the Kite Fly 1992 Competition are announced (7715586)
- 11.30 **The TV Chart Show:** The *Vintage Video* features Madness with 'It Must Be Love' (s) (72040)
- 12.30 **The Munsters Today:** Inferior remake of the classic American comedy series (s) (80853)
- 1.00 **News and weather** (509599)
- 1.10 **Saint and Greavale:** Ian and Jimmy introduce a preview of tomorrow's Rumble of the League Cup semi-final between Nottingham Forest and Tottenham Hotspur (3333448) 1.50 **The 1991 TV Chart** (s) (7439555)
- 1.55 **861 Feet:** The last programme in the series features Nordic skiing (5210332)
- 2.25 **International Athletics:** Carl Lewis makes his first British appearance for eight years in the 60 metres race in the Pearl Assurance Games from the Kelvin Hall in Glasgow. Introduced by Jim Rosenthal (6364833)
- 4.45 **Results Service:** presented by Elton Welsby (4574872)
- 5.00 **News with Sue Carpenter:** Weather (390382) 5.05 **LWT News and weather** (7815243)
- 5.15 **Ten Sharp** with Pat Sharp. The guests are singers the Fresh duo and Brian Cowley, winner of the Variety Club's Most Promising Artists award this week (s) (7811427)
- 5.25 **Baywatch:** David Hasselhoff evicts more disasters (Oracle) (s) (3776021)
- 6.15 **Barrymore:** The comedian meets a four-year-old George Formby impressionist; three bouncers from Essex who perform their own version of *Rubber Ball*; and takes a look at the Australian craze of *Barfing* (s) (355514)
- 7.00 **On the Beach:** Cilla Black looks back at memorable moments from past shows (Oracle) (r) (2885)
- 8.00 **Inspector Morse:** Promised Land. While pursuing an ex-supergroup, Morse and Sergeant Lewis find themselves in the outback of Australia. (CeeFax) (s) (r) (2021)
- 10.00 **News with Sue Carpenter:** Weather (128595) 10.15 **LWT Weather** (175428)



Talking to Michael Aspel: singer Natalie Cole (10.20pm)

- 10.20 **Aspel and Company:** Michael Aspel's guests are Neil King Cole's daughter, Natalie, sister of Natalie's late brother, and funny man John Sessions (891358)
- 11.05 **Tour of Duty:** American drama about a group of soldiers during the Vietnam war (263885)
- 12.10 **Passengers:** An unusual look at some of the great cities of the world. Tonight an inside view of Amsterdam (571482)
- 12.40 **WOW Pro Wrestling** from America (373333)
- 1.40 **New Music:** Denise Donlan and Jane Lynne White present the latest music and celebrity interviews (481844)
- 2.45 **Shangri-Les:** Includes a recording of Anamika playing live at the Dome in Birmingham (71248)
- 3.15 **American College Football:** Georgia v Florida (350905)
- 4.15 **The Hit Man And Her:** Disco sounds and fashion presented by Pete Waterman and Michaela Strachan (s) (1846151)
- 5.30 **Morning News** (18511). Ends at 6.30

CHANNEL 4

- 6.00 **Aquaman** (575683) 6.25 **Dr Snuggles** (590427) 6.55 **Once Upon A Time:** Space (853532) 7.25 **The Complete Slider** (701863) 7.55 **Trane World Sport** (134785)
- 9.00 **News summary** (592285) followed by *The Morning Line* (179021) 9.30 **Listening In** (r) (94770)
- 10.00 **The Big 9:** Action from last year's wheelchair basketball tournament (r). (Telefax) (s) (26330)
- 10.30 **Film:** *Thanks for Everything* (b/w, 1938). Lively satire on advertising starring Jack Haley as a Midwest grocer who is packaged as Mr Average American. Directed by William A. Seiter (550938) 11.50 **Pete Smith Specialities:** Let's Cooze! (b/w) (3607330)
- 12.00 **Get Smart:** Enjoyable spy spoof starring Don Adams (89972)
- 12.30 **The Beverly Hills Cop** (b/w). More classic comedy (89559)
- 1.00 **Film:** *I Was A Male War Bride* (1948, b/w)
- CHOICE: Putting Cary Grant in drag may have been a bolder move in the 1940s than it seems now but the humiliation of an urbane star is still a potent source for comedy. Grant plays a French army captain on duty in occupied Germany after the second world war. He falls in love with an American officer (Anne Sheridan), marries her but discovers he can only accompany her to the United States as a 'war bride'. So on goes the frock and the wig. The director Howard Hawks enjoys himself tilting at a number of targets, especially bureaucracy and the dominating American female, in a film notable for the sombre realism of its setting. As comedies go, this is dark in the literal sense with hardly any relief from bomb damaged buildings and the oppressive atmosphere of the military occupation. It makes a curious and unusual backdrop to a sharp and lively farce with the stars in top form (14595)
- 3.00 **Channel 4 Racing** from Uttoxeter. Live coverage of the 3.10, 3.40, 4.10 and 4.40 races (5405804)
- 5.05 **Brookside Omnibus** (Telefax) (s) (r) (411733)
- 5.30 **Right to Reply** on the success of Channel 4's *Gangmaster*. (Telefax) (s) (533)
- 7.00 **A Week in Politics:** Includes Michael Meacher on Labour's plans for the poor (7917)



A television feast from 1967: presenter Frank Muir (8.00pm)

- 8.00 **TV Heaven:** 1967.
- CHOICE: Heaven, explains Frank Muir from what looks like a part of it, is where television programmes go when they leave your living room. If that is, they have been good. Muir is host for 13 weeks of Saturday night nostalgia, each reliving a television feast from a chosen year. The work of the team that produced the archive evenings *The A-Z of TV* and *1001 Nights*, TV Heaven looks like a wonderful idea. The small screen is often bashful about dwelling on its past, sensitive to the charge of using cheap repeats as a way of filling schedules. This project should kill such reluctance for ever. Tonight's material comes from 1967. In addition to the following four programmes given in their entirety, there are brief reminders of *The Forsyte Saga*, *Late Night Line-Up* and *It's a Knockout*. All are in black and white. Colour arrived in 1968 but that is another story and another trip to TV Heaven (72068)
- 8.05 **At Last the 1948 Show** (b/w). Long thought lost, this is one of five compilation shows discovered in the vaults of Swedish Television. Pre-Monty Python comedy featuring John Cleese, Graham Chapman, Marty Feldman and Tim Brooke-Taylor (441934)
- 8.50 **Coronation Street:** *Elke Tanner's Wedding Day* (b/w). Elaine marries American Steve Tanner (2579801)
- 10.00 **Callan:** A Magnum for Schneider (b/w) starring Edward Woodward, Peter Bowles and Russell Hunter. An *Armchair Theatre* production that was to develop into the long-running series (110778)
- 11.05 **The Frost Programme** (b/w). Insurance swindler Emil Savundra asked to go on the show, mistakenly believing that his charm would sway public opinion in his favour (802595)
- 11.35 **Film:** *The Snake Pit* (b/w, 1948). A tremendous performance by Olivia de Havilland as a woman committed to an asylum in a film designed to change attitudes towards the treatment of mental illness. Directed by Anatole Litvak (183448)
- 1.35am **The Word** (r) (s) (401452). Ends at 2.35

SATellite

- SKY ONE**
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- MORTGAGES/RENTAL 362659
INVESTMENT COUNSELLING 293483
COMMERCIAL GENERAL 362659
INSURANCE 362642
PENSION & LIFE ASSURANCE 289906

Services may not yet be available in all areas. See Regional Press for more details. Services available in the U.K. including Northern Ireland. Mercury users - please select a B.T. line to make the call. National Connect Pk. 81 Warwick Street, Royal Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV32 4RL. Tel: 0925 888833

- 11.30am **News** (0500) 11.55am **News** (0530) 12.30pm **News** (0530) 1.00pm **News** (0530) 1.30pm **News** (0530) 2.00pm **News** (0530) 2.30pm **News** (0530) 3.00pm **News** (0530) 3.30pm **News** (0530) 4.00pm **News** (0530) 4.30pm **News** (0530) 5.00pm **News** (0530) 5.30pm **News** (0530) 6.00pm **News** (0530) 6.30pm **News** (0530) 7.00pm **News** (0530) 7.30pm **News** (0530) 8.00pm **News** (0530) 8.30pm **News** (0530) 9.00pm **News** (0530) 9.30pm **News** (0530) 10.00pm **News** (0530) 10.30pm **News** (0530) 11.00pm **News** (0530) 11.30pm **News** (0530) 12.00am **News** (0530) 12.30am **News** (0530) 1.00am **News** (0530) 1.30am **News** (0530) 1.55am **News** (0530) 2.00am **News** (0530) 2.30am **News** (0530) 3.00am **News** (0530) 3.30am **News** (0530) 4.00am **News** (0530) 4.30am **News** (0530) 5.00am **News** (0530) 5.30am **News** (0530) 6.00am **News** (0530)

- EUROSPORT**
- 6.00am **News** (0500) 6.30am **News** (0530) 7.00am **News** (0530) 7.30am **News** (0530) 8.00am **News** (0530) 8.30am **News** (0530) 9.00am **News** (0530) 9.30am **News** (0530) 10.00am **News** (0530) 10.30am **News** (0530) 11.00am **News** (0530) 11.30am **News** (0530) 12.00am **News** (0530) 12.30am **News** (0530) 1.00am **News** (0530) 1.30am **News** (0530) 1.55am **News** (0530) 2.00am **News** (0530) 2.30am **News** (0530) 3.00am **News** (0530) 3.30am **News** (0530) 4.00am **News** (0530) 4.30am **News** (0530) 5.00am **News** (0530) 5.30am **News** (0530) 6.00am **News** (0530)

- THE MOVIE CHANNEL**
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- SCREENSPORT**
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- THE COMEDY CHANNEL**
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- SKY SPORTS**
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- RADIO 1**
- Classic Albums - INOS. Rick Astley's *Never Gonna Give You Up* (1987) 1.00pm **News** (0500) 1.30pm **News** (0530) 2.00pm **News** (0530) 2.30pm **News** (0530) 3.00pm **News** (0530) 3.30pm **News** (0530) 4.00pm **News** (0530) 4.30pm **News** (0530) 5.00pm **News** (0530) 5.30pm **News** (0530) 6.00pm **News** (0530) 6.30pm **News** (0530) 7.00pm **News** (0530) 7.30pm **News** (0530) 8.00pm **News** (0530) 8.30pm **News** (0530) 9.00pm **News** (0530) 9.30pm **News** (0530) 10.00pm **News** (0530) 10.30pm **News** (0530) 11.00pm **News** (0530) 11.30pm **News** (0530) 12.00am **News** (0530) 12.30am **News** (0530) 1.00am **News** (0530) 1.30am **News** (0530) 1.55am **News** (0530) 2.00am **News** (0530) 2.30am **News** (0530) 3.00am **News** (0530) 3.30am **News** (0530) 4.00am **News** (0530) 4.30am **News** (0530) 5.00am **News** (0530) 5.30am **News** (0530) 6.00am **News** (0530)

- RADIO 2**
- 10.00am **News** (0500) 10.30am **News** (0530) 11.00am **News** (0530) 11.30am **News** (0530) 12.00am **News** (0530) 12.30am **News** (0530) 1.00am **News** (0530) 1.30am **News** (0530) 1.55am **News** (0530) 2.00am **News** (0530) 2.30am **News** (0530) 3.00am **News** (0530) 3.30am **News** (0530) 4.00am **News** (0530) 4.30am **News** (0530) 5.00am **News** (0530) 5.30am **News** (0530) 6.00am **News** (0530)